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FLOWER AND VASE



Wherever flowers are arranged always leave the finishing touches until you have carried the bowl, or vase, to the place it is intended to occupy. Here the Author is completing an autumn arrangement in an earthenware bowl for a side-table in a Jacobean breakfast room.

FLOWER and VASE

A Monthly Key to Room Decoration

by

Anne Lamplugh

LONDON

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TO MOTIF DEAR

If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft,
And from thy slender store two loaves alone
are left,
Sell one, and with the dole,
Buy hyacinths, to feed thy soul."

*Translation from Gulistan ("Garden of Roses")
from a Persian Mosleh Eddin Saadi*

INTRODUCTION

I ONCE met a woman who did not like flowers. She was quite definite about it; couldn't bear to have them near her, couldn't eat if there were flowers on the table.

An odd woman!

On the other hand I have known a few women to whom flowers were a sheer necessity. Women of artistic temperament, swept by the same emotional stresses as the poet or painter, yet denied the gift of creative expression except through the medium of household decoration in which the arrangement of flowers plays such a prominent part.

Odd women these also!

Happily, between these two extremes there are the rest of us—the women who love flowers.

Have you ever considered how many vases of flowers you arrange in a year? Supposing you have three in use about the house during winter, and six in the summer, and that you change the water in them twice a week, do you realise that you arrange four to five hundred vases per year! And when you consider that millions of women in the British Isles spend quite a lot of time in this most pleasant occupation, isn't it surprising how few books there are upon the subject?

Emboldened by this scarcity, and by the many kind letters I have received from listeners to my broadcast talks upon the arrangement of flowers, I have gathered together the ideas and suggestions which I submit to you in the following pages.

INTRODUCTION

A book of this type would not be very helpful if it were divided into chapters in the ordinary way. The busy woman in search of an idea—some little nucleus around which to build an original summer decoration—does not want to spend an hour turning the pages of a book pursuing some half-remembered hint about geraniums through a labyrinth of description of the use of snow-drops, the best treatment of chrysanthemums, the preservation of autumn foliage, and so on. She wants to be able to turn straight away to summer flowers, and in a few minutes have the facts about the geranium before her. In order to make such reference as simple as possible this book has been drawn up in calendar form, with a chapter for each month of the year. At the end of every chapter appear lists which I think may be helpful; lists for the woman who buys her flowers as well as for the garden owner.

In these pages I have not catered for extravagant tastes that demand rare flowers and a bottomless purse, but rather for the woman who arranges those flowers which grow within her garden, or who spends a modest sum each week in the florist's shop, or she who takes her purse and a persuasive smile to the nearest nursery garden and there gathers an armful of beauty for her vases.

ANNE LAMPLUGH

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Mainly from photographs taken for the Author by J. Kershaw, Esq.

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MARCH

THE FLOWER VASE IN SPRING

VERY early in the year in almost every garden "the bulb . . . hails far summer with his lifted spear" and the first golden crocuses appear, like steady candle flames, to light our feet upon the flowery path as yet but dimly seen, but soon to be outlined with daffodil and wallflower, with primrose, violet and cyclamen, and with the wistful beauty of narcissi.

Have you ever noticed what a large number of the spring flowers are yellow?

I read a theory somewhere (I forget where) that when the world was young, and only a very low form of plant life—mosses, tiny creeping plants, and so on—existed, yellow was the first colour which stole into the world of flowers. Perhaps in the dim distance of remote time, when all flora was green, the stamens of some minute flower gradually turned yellow, and then, after a long while, the petals took on a yellowish cast too, and finally the whole flower became yellow. Maybe for a long while yellow was the only colour the flowers possessed. Very gradually it deepened through orange to red and reddish violet, to pure violet, until, last of all colours to develop was clear blue.

It's an interesting theory, isn't it? Perhaps it won't bear very close scrutiny; I don't know—

Anyway, whether most of the first flowers of the world were yellow or not, certainly most of the first flowers of the year are.

You are thinking of daffodils, aren't you? Yes, I knew you were, and so am I. The very words "yellow spring flowers" bring daffodils to the minds of most of us.

How do you arrange your daffodils? They are perhaps at their best when arranged as though growing, springing from the water in a bowl as they do from the soil. Where a large vase is required branches are a help. The sweeping curves of *Forsythia suspensa* are the best for this purpose; where forsythia is not obtainable, budding branches of beech, lime, sycamore, larch or honeysuckle could be substituted. Daffodils look well in ginger jars, and the old double "Von Sion" that live in our orchards, are lovely in brown pint mugs.

Another yellow flower constantly in our vases in the Spring of the year is mimosa. Mimosa is so beautiful that one is sometimes tempted to use too much of it at a time. If you want to see mimosa at its best put just one well-balanced spray in a tall green jar, a jar with a neck almost as narrow as that of a medicine bottle. So placed, every beauty which the spray possesses is apparent, the tapering line of the silvery stem, the elegant drooping grey-green leaves which form such a perfect background to those balls of yellow fluff that serve mimosa as a flower.

Small sprays of mimosa with purple anemones in a pale yellow jar and finger bowls in which tiny sprigs of mimosa and long stemmed violets are mixed suggest themselves as alternative ways in which to use this most ornamental flower.

Unfortunately, mimosa does not live very long in water.

And the little crocus. Now you may think crocuses are not much use for vases, but wait—have you tried them with the tiny *Iris reticulata* (violet-scented iris)?

These two combine most beautifully in a squat green vase about three inches high. Or, if you have no *Iris reticulata* with which to combine them, dig your crocus up as soon as the buds show (the bulbs don't mind being disturbed), and plant ten or a dozen close together in a little soil in a small blue and white bowl. They will last for about ten days, opening their golden cups if a ray of sunshine falls on them, and closing again at the end of each day. When the flowers die return the bulbs to their place in the garden; they will be none the worse for their adventure.

Primroses and polyanthus can be treated in similar fashion by those who grow them.

A bunch of primroses and some mauve parma violets are very sweet together. Put a vase of them on your writing desk so that you will catch their delicate fragrance whilst you are writing your letters.

The winter aconite's little yellow flowers with their surrounding whirl of green, are so short in the stalk that the only way to use them indoors is to allow them to float upon water in a shallow dish. The heads of a few yellow aconites with a white Christmas rose or two in a shallow black bowl would be flat and uninteresting, unless something upright were added to give height. So hide a glass or lead flower holder beneath the water upon which the flowers float, and into this wedge a sprig or two of winter jasmine, or of that other yellow flowering shrub, *Chimonanthus fragrans*, which many folk call "Winter Sweet" because of its strong perfume.

Yellow spring flowers are ideal for the breakfast table, particularly when associated with a yellow bordered white table-cloth and a pale yellow and white breakfast service.

For the luncheon table stimulating colours such as orange and scarlet are more suitable, while a quieter

and more restful colour scheme is in keeping with the leisurely evening meal.

So if I were decorating a table for a small luncheon party during March I should think first of all of tulips. Such gorgeous colourings there are in the modern tulip! Perhaps I should choose orange ones, and use the grey leaves of *Cineraria maritima* as a foil for their brightness—or scarlet ones in a silver bowl. If the dining-room faced north, or had a rather dark wallpaper, I should put fully-opened double white tulips in a cut glass bowl with just a few scarlet anemones to make a gay splash of colour.

I might even be able to obtain for my luncheon table some of the old-fashioned *Pyrus japonica*, its twisted bare branches thick set with coral red flowers. Just three sprays would be enough, and I should arrange them in the Japanese way, all three close together springing from one corner of a square bronze dish.

Or I might fill finger bowls with *Primula Wanda* (wine red) and *Aubrietia Dr. Mules* (purple), and add just a few blue scillas to bind the colour together.

When March winds are shaking the dusty pollen from the long catkins of the hazel, gather a few twigs, or some branches of "palm," and mix these with white narcissi. Narcissi look beautiful with branches of a pink-flowered tree which is usually called "Almond," though its proper name is *Prunus Amygdalus*. I have seen dozens and dozens of these same trees in gardens in the suburbs, and I often picture the fortunate owners of them gathering armfuls of branches for their vases.

For the woman who likes pink flowers there is a wide choice in spring. Tulips are to be had in quite a dozen shades of rose and rosy mauve. I have even seen some that were a clear shrimp pink. Those who grow their own tulips may search the bulb catalogues in vain, either



Here a Decca cover of gunmetal grey repeats and accentuates the grey of "palm," and helps to throw into prominence the pale beauty of narcissi



The lovely curves of the stalks of St. Bridget Anemones brought into prominence by using only a few flowers in a small bowl set against a dark background

for these shrimp pink or yet for the lovely jade green tulips which the florists offer in bunches, the reason being that tulips do not grow in these colours ; they are dyed. I believe *La Reine* is the only one which takes the dye successfully. No doubt it is an unnatural thing to dye a flower—savouring a little of painting the lily—nevertheless these shrimp pink, and even more so the cool jade green tulips, are very lovely, and they make a most unusual table decoration.

Pink anemones are a little insipid alone, but look well when mixed with parma violets or a few spikes of lily of the valley. Pinky-mauve cyclamen are only for those who grow their own greenhouse flowers. I have seen them arranged in four large Sheffield plate salt cellars, surrounding an old Sheffield plate candelabra which held five cyclamen-coloured candles, and I thought it one of the prettiest table decorations I had ever seen.

And then there's blue. It is difficult to find any blue flowers during March, excepting blue hyacinths, and they are so stiffly symmetrical as to be almost impossible from a vase point of view. Just a little later on there will be bunches of forget-me-nots on the flower-seller's trays and in the shop windows, and later still in our gardens. These tiny flowers live a long time in water and mix well with many of the smaller things, primroses, pink anemones, yellow jasmine, wallflower, etc. They also form a pretty groundwork for taller flowers.

Lengthening days will bring the almost breath-taking blue of *chionodoxas*, beautiful when arranged in a little black vase in which a few twigs of hawthorn are shaking the creases from their new green leaves.

But, whatever you arrange blue flowers in, be sure to stand the finished vase close to the window, for blue flowers are very disappointing unless seen in direct daylight.

M A R C H

Spring flowers, so eagerly welcomed, pass almost unnoticed from the house. One day, when the orchards are white with blossom and a lark sings in the sunshine, you go out into the garden, scissors in hand, to search for the first lupins, for golden doronicums, for honesty, and for many-coloured iris, and when you return spring has stolen quietly away and summer has come to take her place in the flower vases.

MARCH

FOR GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

Daffodils.	Squills.
Narcissus.	Blackthorn.
Violets.	Forsythia.
Polyanthus.	Chionodoxas.
Crocus.	Snowdrops.
Blue Anemones (apennina).	Wallflowers.
Iberis sempervirens (Ever-green Candytuft).	

LOOKING AHEAD

The free-flowering Clematis are invaluable for vases ; plant now.	Phlox.
Plant Christmas Roses.	Pinks.
Sow Larkspur, the branching kinds, not the dwarfs.	Carnations.
Some of the paler pinks and mauves are insipid ; the deep pink is very good indeed, and lights up well.	Potentilla.
Plant :	Astilbe (Goat's Beard).
Pyrethrum.	Erigeron.
Scabiosa caucasica.	Monarda didyma.
Nepeta Mussini.	Michaelmas Daisies (especially the pink ones).
Geum.	All the above give useful cut flowers.
Agrostemma.	Inula glandulosa. Produces daisy-like flowers with finely shredded yellow petals practically throughout the whole of the summer.
Armeria gigantea.	Meconopsis cambrica. Also has a long period of bloom, giving yellow flowers from May to October.
Gaillardias.	Sow (in the greenhouse)
Coreopsis.	Salvia Horminum, the
Eryngium (Sea Holly).	
Rudbeckias.	

M A R C H

annual purple sage. Grow some pale yellow spiky flowers to use in conjunction with the deep purple bracts of this in August ; flowers such as sulphur yellow Gladioli, Mullein, Tree Lupin, or primrose yellow Antirrhinums. Sow *Lathyrus sativus* azureus, a tiny azure-blue

Sweet Pea. This can be trained up sticks, but is better hanging over a low wall or on a bank. These blue peas mix delightfully with pink Shirley Poppies, lilac Sweet Sultan, and so on. Make a first sowing of *Godetia* and Marigolds out of doors.

FOR NON-GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Narcissus in variety.
Tulips.
Lilac.
Daffodils.
Camellia.
Lily of the Valley.
Roses.
Primroses.
Violets.
Anemones.
Iris.
Stocks.

Arums.
Carnations.
Forget-me-nots.
Freesias.
White Heather.
Roman Hyacinths.
Marigolds.
Wallflowers.
Acacia.
Allium.
Anemone de Caen. } French.

APRIL

THE FLOWER ROOM

WE associate artistic ability and a certain amount of ingenuity with the arrangement of flowers. Certainly this is a task in which a woman's hands, and the imagination behind those hands, are of paramount importance. But we arrange flowers with our feet too!

Put that way it sounds startling, so shall I say instead that feet play an important part in the arrangement of flowers.

There are so many little journeys to make ere a dozen vases are done. You know the sort of thing I mean—going from one room to another collecting vases—off to the butler's pantry for water—into the kitchen with a tray of dead flowers—to the work-basket for scissors—up to the bedroom mantelpiece for a small vase in which some particular flowers would look their best—to the dining-room for a shallow bowl—and where on earth can that bag of charcoal have been put? Can one wonder that men sometimes speak of arranging flowers as “pottering about.”

Those who have lived in an old country house that has a tiny flower-room tucked away just inside the front door or side entrance, its shelves filled with an orderly array of vases and bowls, flanked by a row of hooks for scissors, basket, garden gloves, etc., and a wide sensible sink; know just how convenient such a room can be, and how very appreciably it can add to the joy of “doing the flowers.”

Why flower rooms are confined to a few old houses is a complete mystery. Our architects talk a very great deal about labour-saving devices, yet here is one which would appeal to almost every woman, and which, moreover, would not take up more space in the house than a large cupboard.

Why has it been so persistently overlooked?

If it is impracticable to hope for flower rooms in the small modern city houses (and perhaps it is), surely we might at least expect to find one in each of those houses where considerable gardens are being laid out.

Fortunately almost any large cupboard can be made into an excellent substitute for a flower room. Obviously the cupboard must be close to running water, so perhaps a place could be found for it in the cloak-room, butler's pantry, or, in very small houses or flats, room might be made in the bathroom.

Even more suitable than a cupboard would be a marble-topped wash-hand-stand. As a result of the introduction of running water to our bedrooms there must be thousands of "out of work" wash-hand-stands stored away in attics all over the country. Why not unearth one and fit it up as a substitute for a flower room?

The larger the wash-hand-stand the better. In any case the top will be just the right height to do your arranging upon, and being of marble will be impervious to water; the two cupboards will hold vases, and there'll probably be room beneath for a waste paper basket or slop pail for dead flowers, and a large jug or watering can with which to fill up vases, or water-growing plants. It is an excellent plan to screw two or three hooks inside each door of the cupboard. These will accommodate a pair of stout scissors, a pair of secateurs, a pair of old gloves, and some reels and bundles of wire of

various thickness. On the towel rail at the end hang the glass-cloth and dish-cloth, necessary for washing out vases which have been used.

Inside the cupboard collect as large an assortment as possible of vases and bowls of every shape and size.

A really good collection of vases takes quite a time to acquire. Each season has its particular need. Early in the year the daffodils arrive, and one must search for rather short, wide-mouthed receptacles of cottage pottery. Snowdrops, primroses, and violets, each in turn will call for a small green bowl or shallow vase. The huge early Victorian salt cellars sometimes obtainable are just right for these flowers.

Have you seen pale yellow tulips in a pewter tankard? Or mauve ones in a pink lustre jug? I mean the kind of lustre jug that sailormen brought home from Sunderland about eighty years ago. Any vase shaped like a jug or tankard (that is with almost straight sides, about 10 or 12 inches in height) suits tulips admirably.

And when the tulips are over what a host of things they make way for! Branches of laburnum, of crab apple, of "palm" and lilac—hawthorn, too, for those who are not superstitious—all these will need big strong vases.

Iris should not be put into a vase, they look so much better in a wide dish not more than two or three inches high. Half a dozen with some of their natural foliage may be wedged into a heavy glass flower-holder and one head allowed to float on the water; or, if the dish is really large, try four or five in one flower-holder and two in another a few inches from the first. In any case hide the glass flower-holders from view by piling a few stones loosely around them. Arranged in this way iris appear to be growing from a small island in a sheet of water, a most natural thing for them to do.

Roses! Well every woman has her own idea about the arrangement of roses; her favourite rose vase, too. Many prefer a glass vase, because it shows not only the rose but the often beautiful stem thick-set with bright red thorns. Others use a rose bowl, and where there are only one or two roses to arrange silver specimen vases come into their own.

And so it goes on.

As the different flowers come into season your flower cupboard will fill up so that by the end of the first year of its existence you will have quite a comprehensive collection of vases. Nor will you, I think, consider your collection complete at the end of the first year, for the thing is apt to become something of a hobby, and one is constantly on the lookout for an excuse for buying *just one more* vase. Perhaps you will only replace the vase which went once too often to the tap, or the one which a friend admired so much that you gladly gave it away. Perhaps you will buy a new one whenever a new idea for the arrangement of flowers suggests itself—and in the latter case I'm afraid a flower cupboard will soon overflow, and the time will arrive when you'll just *have* to have a real flower room.

Other things as well as vases will occupy the flower cupboard. Chief in importance amongst these is the glass or lead flower-holder.

Glass flower-holders should range from small ones, each about the size of a five-shilling piece and costing about fourpence, to the large two-shilling variety. When buying them it is as well to choose those which are slightly raised on wee knobs, or feet, since the water can get underneath these, and therefore they are better than the kind which lie quite flat in the bottom of a bowl.

A strip of inch-wide lead can be bent to suit the par-



A wash hand stand makes an excellent substitute for a flower room.



Here an excellent arrangement, in perfect harmony with its background, is marred by an ill-chosen vase. (Horse shoe knot bouquet used as more selected material.)

ticular requirements of any flower which needs support—bent so that it holds equally firmly narrow stem and broad in the one bowl. So much cannot be said of any bought flower-holder.

Sand is an excellent thing in which to arrange small flowers, Christmas roses, crocus, hardy and greenhouse cyclamen, pansies, in fact all the low-growing flowers which have rigid stems. It should, of course, be made so wet that about a quarter of an inch of water shows above the sand, and should be hidden from view by moss or foliage.

Large and small stones, or gravel, or limestone chips, can be used to hide flower-holders which, if they show, completely destroy the beauty of an arrangement in a shallow vessel. So keep a basket of these at hand.

Three bundles of wire should always hang in your flower cupboard or flower room. A reel of pin wire and a bundle of eighteen-inch-lengths of rigid wire (such as are used in bouquets) can be obtained from the florist, and a coil of green hat wire from your milliner or the haberdashery counter of a big store.

Wire has endless uses. A length of galvanised wire twisted round and round until it resembles a spring in shape will hold in place such flowers as daffodil, coreopsis, narcissi or gaillardias, flowers which are always rather difficult to arrange because of their tendency to flop to the sides of a vase, leaving an ugly bare space in the centre.

Try making a curve of green hat wire, with its two ends firmly fixed in a large heavy glass flower-holder. Put the holder in a shallow bowl and hide it with half-a-dozen fairly large stones (these will help to steady the decoration). Keep this foundation always on hand, for with it you can make an endless number of decorations.

Suitable lengths of common nasturtium twisted round the wire, the bowl filled with nasturtium flowers and a few leaves, makes a warm decoration which shows to advantage against a white table-cloth. Such a decoration would be particularly suitable for a luncheon or small dinner party on a dull summer day. If no fire were used in the dining-room the fireplace could be filled with a bowl of flame-coloured nasturtiums, and they would look almost as cheerful as, and would indeed closely resemble, a bright fire.

To go back to the wire foundation. During the summer it can be covered with honeysuckle, flame flower, canary creeper, convolvulus, etc. In autumn lengths of virginia creeper and brightly tinted bramble foliage (see illustration facing p. 48) may be pressed into service, while winter will provide the humble ivy of the hedges, with bunches of red berries, too—if the birds haven't eaten them all.

The eighteen-inch lengths of stiff wire are to persuade recalcitrant flowers to a required angle.

Please do not think I am advocating wiring flowers in the way florists wire them. Maybe Sir Chundra Bose is right in his claim that flowers can feel, maybe he is wrong. I, at any rate, have always felt that it is cruel to put a couple of wires through the heart of a rose, or any other flower for that matter. But a rigid wire to *persuade*, lightly twisted round a stalk or held in place by pin wire where it will not show among the foliage, that is very different, isn't it?

Baskets! Now I hold a brief for baskets. Why are not these, the most graceful of flower receptacles, more frequently used? An empty basket is decorative, and how much more so when filled with flowers!

Baskets can be simple or they can be elaborate. There are baskets for every kind of house. Tall, large and

sophisticated ones for big lofty rooms, small simple ones of rush work or fibre for the country cottage, gay raffia affairs of geometrical shape to suit the modern house with its clean lines and clear colours. And, of course, the flowers must suit the basket. Violas or primroses are just right in a little wicker basket when seen in a small house. A gold basket, elegant in shape, its tall handle tied with wide green ribbon, and filled to overflowing with red carnations or gladioli, is only suitable for a large room somewhat elaborately furnished.

Perhaps you think a flower cupboard would be incomplete if it did not contain some kind of "flower preservative."

One hears of many (so-called) "flower preservatives," asperin, salt, Condyl's fluid—a host of things—but none of them really lengthens the life of cut flowers. It is true that some of them will temporarily revive drooping flowers, but if anything they shorten rather than prolong their life.

If you receive faded flowers by post and wish to revive them quickly, try dipping the stems in hot (almost boiling) water. The flowers will pick up quickly, but their subsequent life will be considerably shorter than would have been the case if they could have been plunged up to their necks in a bucketful of rain water and stood in a cool dark place for a few hours after their arrival.

The ideal treatment for cut flowers is to change the water every day, but where a long time has been spent upon their arrangement this is not practicable. The next best thing is to put a piece of charcoal in the bottom of the vase, or hold the vase beneath a running tap for a few moments every day in order to freshen the water.

Eschscholtzias and morning glories lose their petals immediately if they are picked in the ordinary way, but

A P R I L

if gathered while still in bud and allowed to develop in a jar of water in the flower room they will last quite well. Poppies should be gathered when the first frilled morsel of colour bursts through the green calyx.

Branches of trees and flowering shrubs, such as lilac, apple, pear, rambler rose, and laburnum, will live longer in water if the bark is peeled from that part of the branch which will be under water, or if the woody stems are bruised with a heavy object—I keep a little wooden mallet in my flower cupboard for this purpose.





APRIL

FOR GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

Tulips.	Various Primulas.
Wallflowers.	Ribes (flowering currant).
Forget-me-nots.	Almond.
Cheiranthus Allionii.	Doronicum.
Forsythia (the golden ball shrub).	Hyacinths.
St. Brigid Anemone.	Primroses.
Various Berberis.	Rhododendrons.
Muscari.	Azaleas.

LOOKING AHEAD

Ornamental grasses are extremely useful to lighten an arrangement of heavy flowers ; they may be dried for winter use. The following are good kinds to sow now : <i>Agrostis nebulosa</i> (cloud grass), <i>Aira pulchella</i> (hair grass), <i>Hordeum maritimum</i> (squirrel tail grass).	look better so and last twice as long).
Grow the poppy "Perry's White" to use as a companion to oriental poppies.	Sow :
Sow <i>Clarkias</i> (when arranging strip away almost all the leaves ; the flowers	Honesty.
	Marigolds.
	Nasturtium.
	Poppies.
	Cornflower.
	Gypsophila.
	Mignonette.
	<i>Nigella</i> (Love-in-a-Mist).
	Lavatera.
	<i>Eschscholtzia</i> .
	<i>Bartonia aurea</i> .
	Plant :
	<i>Chrysanthemum maximum</i> .

FOR NON-GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Lilac.	Stocks.
Anemones.	Camellias.
Wallflowers.	Forget-me-nots.
Tulips.	Iris (blue, white, yellow and
Daisies.	mauve).
Very early Sweet Peas.	Marigolds.
Azalea.	Daffodils.
Arum Lilies.	Narcissi.
Roses.	

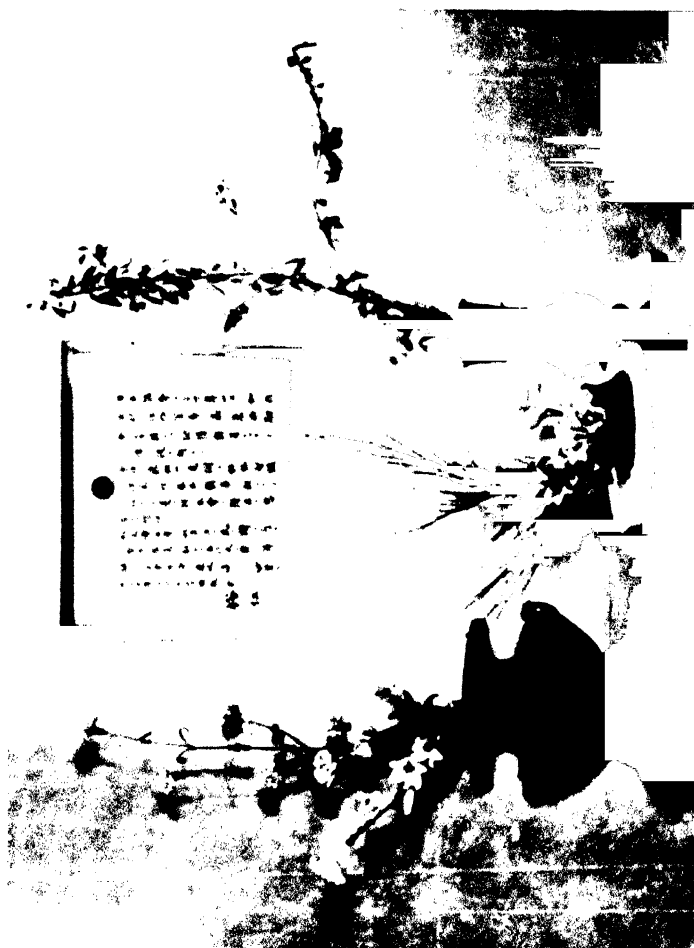


while giving an effect of luxurious confusion lacks distinction, and has nothing like so much beauty of line as the simpler arrangement.

Suppose you wish to arrange a vase in a modification of the Japanese manner, something like the photograph facing page 16, you will need three sprays of blossom. Probably you will not be able to find three which are suitable in length and curve, and which have no side spurs; however, so long as size and curves are fairly good the side spurs do not matter, since they can always be neatly cut off with a pair of gardening scissors. The tallest, or primary, spray should be in height at least one and a half times the width of the bowl from which your arrangement is to spring. Choose a branch with a curve in it—a double curve if possible. The shorter branch, or tertiary, should be arranged upon the hollow side of the curve of the primary, while the branch which is of medium length, the secondary, must stand upon the primary's other side. Having wedged the three branches into as heavy a glass flower-holder as you can find, stand the floral group in a round, square, oblong, or boat-shaped bowl. Whatever the shape of the bowl it is better to put the flowers slightly to one side, and not in the exact centre.

If the branches are really long a few stones piled around the flower-holder will help to steady the group and will not detract in any way from the appearance of the vase. Stones will be particularly useful if the bowl is to stand in a position where a draught from an open window or the sleeve of someone passing by, might disturb the flowers.

If necessary, when the blossom is finally in position, a pair of scissors may be again used to remove an odd flower or a leaf which may seem to detract from the beauty of the group.





The finished vase should have an isolated position, where nothing will distract the eye from a full appreciation of its beauty. If there are other vases in the room these should be of simple spring flowers. Indeed, if the room be small, probably one other branch of blossom in a tall, narrow-necked vase would constitute a sufficient floral decoration.

An even more modified application of this Japanese effect can be obtained by using one large branch of blossom wedged among stones in a large dish, and stood upon a low stool in a corner of the room, or in the angle formed by some piece of furniture and the wall. To look well the spray of blossoms should be really large. Some idea of the size of the one in the photograph facing page 17 may be obtained from the fact that the brass tray by which it stands is 24 inches across. This branch of crab-apple blossom was not trimmed in any way; it is exactly as taken from the tree, and took about three minutes to arrange. Branches even more beautiful are to be found on almost any large apple or cherry tree.

MAY

FOR GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LAKE

Peonies.	Kerria japonica.
Iris.	Rhododendrons.
Honesty.	Various fruit blossoms.
Doronicum.	Lilac.
Aquilegias.	Trollius.
Pyrethrums.	Clematis.
Lupins.	Diclytra.
Copper beech and oak foliage	Ranunculus.
are very pretty during	Tulips.
May.	Wallflowers.
Lily of the Valley.	Laburnums.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sow Heuchera (Snake Root), leaves evergreen, very use- ful and dainty.	Sow biennials.
Sow Coonara, or Iceland Poppies for next year. Try Harkness' Giant Iceland Poppies if you have not already done so—they are excellent for cutting.	Honesty.
Sow biennials :	Forget-me-nots.
Canterbury Bell.	Columbine.
Campanula pyramidalis.	Mullein.
Wallflower.	Plant Gladioli.
	Sow in greenhouse Cine- rarias for winter use.
	Towards the end of the month plant out Stocks and Asters, Dahlias and all other half-hardy things.





FOR NON-GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Iris. Various colours.	Iceland Poppies.	
Tulips.	Ixia.	
Spiræa.	Marigold.	
Hydrangea (plants).	Pelargoniums.	
Peonies.	Pinks.	
Pyrethrum.	Stocks.	
Trollius.	Carnations.	
Ranunculus.	Forget-me-nots.	
Sweet Peas.	Viola cornuta.	
Anemones, St. Brigid.	Gypsophila elegans.	} French.
Gladioli (the Bride, Peach Blossom, Blushing Bride).	Marguerites.	
	Statice sinuata.	

JUNE

COLOUR SCHEMES AND BACKGROUNDS

THINKING out colour schemes for flower vases would be mere child's play if the vases when finished were to stand against a plain white or a plain black background. But thinking out colour schemes for vases to stand in different rooms, against a variety of backgrounds, is a rather more difficult matter. Here the background will consist of a number of things, such as the wallpaper, style of furnishing, size of room, and lighting—all of which must be taken into consideration when arranging flowers. Not only must the colours used blend with the colours in the room, but the size of the arrangement must be compatible with the size of the room and the position which the vase is to occupy. To give an instance—A big jar filled with large branches of lilac in a small, low-ceilinged room must stand upon the floor, and even there would be apt to make the room look smaller than its real size, whereas the same jar of lilac in a large, lofty room might stand upon a table in one corner and would be in excellent proportion with the size of the room.

Again, different flowers suit different houses.

Imagine a handful of pinks in a little copper-lustre jug standing on a small oval table in a white-walled cottagy room; dimity curtains fluttering at the open latticed windows, comfortable old wheel-backed chairs before a wide friendly fireplace—in fact, such a cottage room as you may find not only in old houses but in many a small modern home. Well, now, remove that little jug of

pinks from the table, and in their place stand a large cut-glass bowl of orchids !

You see what I mean, don't you ? It would be absolutely incongruous.

Put the cut-glass bowl of orchids and the little lustre jug full of pinks against a plain black velvet background in a show tent, and most women would undoubtedly vote the bowl of orchids the more beautiful of the two arrangements. But offer the type of woman who lives in a cosy little room such as the one I have just described her choice of the two vases for the centre of her oval table, and she, knowing by experience that simple flowers look best in her home, would undoubtedly choose the pinks.

Most women know by experience that certain flowers and certain colours suit the various rooms of their house, and this knowledge they enlarge from time to time by experimenting.

When you have an hour to spare on a sunshiny morning it is pleasant to go into the garden and gather some of this, a little of that, and a spray or two of the other, blend the three, and then carry the vase from room to room about the house to see how it will look against this setting or that. But this is not a practice to be indulged in on busy days, and, as busy days are the most numerous, nine times out of ten we are glad to remember some arrangement or colour scheme which we know will look just right in the place it is destined to grace. These favourite arrangements we use again and again each season, so that in going to the garden or shop for flowers after a time one almost instinctively looks for—shall we say—rather bold, large-headed flowers in red or orange for the dining-room, light dainty flowers in delicate colourings for the drawing-room, something tall and branching, white or pale yellow, for that darkish corner

of the hall—and so on, according, as I said before, to the type of room and the colourings in the house.

Having once made up our minds as to the size of the arrangement and the type of flowers we wish to use, we are able to give our whole attention to the delights of colour blending ; and what a fascinating occupation it is !

A year or two ago the majority of people used one kind of flower only in a vase, and this limited the scope of their colour blending very drastically. But lately the vase containing two or even three different kinds of flowers is steadily growing in popularity.

I have been particularly struck by the number of such vases in which orange plays the leading part. I have seen orange flowers mixed with deep red ones, with scarlet, with golden yellow, with white, and with deep cardinal purple. The latter was a lovely combination consisting of a low bowl of candytuft in which there were a few spikes of *eschscholtzias*. *Eschscholtzias* are very beautiful amongst the grey leaves of *Cineraria maritima*, too.

The old Scottish marigold has returned to favour. It makes a wonderful splash of colour in almost any room.

Yellow is a colour to play with, either in daylight or by artificial light. Think of pale cream yellow rambler roses (such as *Alberic Barbier*) with sprays of purple clematis (see page 37) ; think of yellow tree-lupins with the pale "skimmed milk" blue of the chimney bell flower. Every one knows how beautifully *Parma violets* mix with prim-roses but not so many people have tried putting the wine red honesty-flower with those golden daisies of spring, the *doronicums*. Unfortunately the latter flowers do not seem to care much for one another's society, for I notice they do not live long in water together, though in separate vases either of them will live for five or six days. Many yellow flowers look well with small sprays of copper beech leaves or twigs of *Prunus Pissardi*.

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If there is a rather dark corner in any part of your house try putting a vase of yellow flowers there, and then if you have some blue flowers substitute a vase of these ; you will be amazed at the different effects created. The yellow flowers will lighten the corner tremendously ; the blue ones—well—the blue ones might just as well not be there for all the notice they will receive. Blue flowers are *really* not for the house ! I know it is tempting when delphiniums raise their stately spires to gather an armful and stand them in a big pitcher in the hall. But only those who have sacrificed a fine clump of delphiniums to this temptation know just how dreadfully disappointing the result is. In the house even by daylight their wonderful blues look faded, while by artificial light they become smoke-grey or a dull mauvish-purple.

What applies to delphiniums applies to almost all the blue flowers. If you feel, despite this, that you must have them about you, then stand them near the window or wherever there is a chance of a ray of sunlight falling on them.

Pink is a most accommodating colour. There are really two distinct pinks, the one which has a yellowish cast and is usually called "salmon," and the real rosy-pink. There are very few colours which will not blend with either one or the other.

Great heavy-headed pink peonies and sturdy stocks of the same shade in a grey vase of Copenhagen china would be delightful. Into such a vase a third flower could be introduced, either half-a-dozen purple iris or a spike or two of lupin would be admirable. Although lupins look well with many flowers (particularly irises), they will never be favourites indoors, for they make such a mess, dropping their upper flowers in hundreds all over the carpets and furniture ere they are a couple of days old. Pink sweet peas and mauve scabious are often used for

the vases in table-decorating competitions at the flower shows ; so are pink carnations with mauve sweet peas. I often wonder that someone does not use a little imagination at these affairs, and decorate a table with *Nepeta Mussini* and the very deep pink *armeria* or "Thrift," as it is more commonly called. Or they might use pink *Canterbury bells* and blue *hydrangeas*. Sweet Williams embrace almost every shade of pink and red, as well as white and many mixtures. Have you ever tried to arrange Sweet Williams ? I have tried many times, and have now given it up as a bad job. It is a tantalising position, for the modern Sweet Williams are full of beautiful colours. One thing is obvious ; these flowers are best when seen from above and they must, therefore, have a jar upon the floor or upon a low shelf or stool. I have tried them in rather tall, narrow vases, and they look dreadfully stiff ; in a short vase they look squat and stolid ; allowed to sprawl in a bowl they are ungainly—oh, a very tantalising flower the Sweet William !

Red flowers divide themselves into two classes : those which do, and those which do not contain a purplish cast. For years the latter—the cold reds—have been taboo. But now that fuschia and wine shades are becoming so fashionable for furnishing I can see the purple reds returning to favour. One of the prettiest flowers in this colour is *Agrostemma Coronaria*. Its own grey leaves are so exactly the right thing to throw into prominence its rich colouring that it would be, I think, a mistake to use it in conjunction with any other flower. A great many primulas show this fuschia colouring ; I have used them with the grey leaves of *Cineraria maritima* in a pewter vessel.

There are only a few really vivid scarlet flowers. Foremost amongst these are the great flaming oriental poppies and some of the smaller poppies. If poppies are gathered





when fully opened they will drop their petals as soon as they are put into water, but if they are picked when the first crumpled morsel of colour breaks from the bud they will open in water and live for several days. *Monarda didyma* and the "Jerusalem Cross"—both look well with such white flowers as phlox, white godetias, or clarkias. Then there are scarlet geraniums! People are apt to laugh at these flowers and murmur the word "Victorian," but you know a few whorls of scarlet geranium floating in a pewter plate on the highly polished top of a long refectory table will call forth exclamations of admiration from all who see them.

JUNE

FOR GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

Iceland Poppies.	Lilium candidum.
Oriental Poppies.	Sweet Peas.
Spiræa.	Lychnis.
Thrift.	Tree Lupin.
Campanula persicifolia.	Nepeta Mussini.
Valerian (both white and red).	Monarda didyma.
Clematis.	Syringa.
Coreopsis.	Scabious.
Delphinium.	Canterbury Bell.
Pinks.	Pentstemons.
Honeysuckle.	Lupins.
Sweet Peas.	Cornflower.
Foxgloves.	Gypsophila.
Erigeron.	And many of the flowers
Galega.	mentioned in last month's
Escallonia.	list.
Heuchera.	

LOOKING AHEAD

Plant Flag Iris.	Sow Sweet Rocket, white and
Sow in the greenhouse :	purple, for fragrant flowers
Primulas, Cinerarias, Inter-	next May.
mediate and Brompton	Plant hardy Cyclamen euro-
Stocks, for flowers in the	pæum and neapolitanum,
winter.	to flower through the
Take pipings of Pinks.	autumn and winter.

FOR NON-GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Coreopsis.	Pyrethrums.
Pinks.	Gypsophila.
Sweet Peas.	Hydrangeas.
Scabious.	Iceland Poppies.
Roses.	Iris.
Anemones.	Various Lilies.
Carnations.	Marguerites.
Cornflowers.	Marigolds.
Delphiniums.	Nigella.
Forget-me-nots.	Peonies.
Gladioli—"The Bride."	Pelargoniums.
Gladioli—large flowered varieties.	Statice.
	Stocks, white.

JULY

FLORAL BI-PRODUCTS

MUCH of the sweetness of summer can be retained in pot-pourri and perfumes.

Here is a recipe which I found in my great-grandmother's cookery book. It is written in a fine Italian hand on paper yellow with age. It says :

“ To the leaves of many roses add Lavender and Rue and any other Sweet smelling leaves, as Pelargonium leaves, sweet-rush, Balm and thyme ; a handful of Rosemary, and of clove pinks and flag lillies a liberal amount. Dry all these so that they be quite dry, for if any damp remain amongst them the ‘ Pot-pourri ’ will mildew and be spoilt ; then add a little orris root, cinnamon and sandalwood and stir well together.”

We make this “ pot-pourri ” each year and when dry, we put it into flat muslin bags about the size of a large envelope and stitch one of these to every cushion in the house. Beneath the cushion covers these bags are not apparent, and have caused us many a quiet smile. We have often watched a guest lean back in her chair, and in so doing crush out an elusive fragrance of which she gradually became aware. Her bewilderment, having looked all round the room for a possible explanation and found none—not even a bowl of “ pot-pourri ”—is too amusing. We always end by sharing the joke with our guests, and as often as not the bags of “ pot-pourri ” too.





Waxen white phlox contrast well with sprays of blue veronica.

Last summer the pleasure which these little hidden bags of "pot-pourri" had given suggested a use for the many sweet-smelling herbs which the herb garden contained.

We dried a great pile of thyme, lavender, wormwood, sweet briar, rosemary, rue, verbena, tansy, geranium leaves, woodruff, southernwood, and even a little sage, mint, and sweet marjoram. When we were sure it was snuff dry we stuffed this fragrant mass into a cretonne cushion cover and so made a cushion. The cushion was intended for the hammock. It soon found its way into the drawing-room, and, being much appreciated there, somehow got upstairs "and so to bed." There it would still lie disguised in a white slip, but for an old lady who visited us and who suffered from insomnia. We lent it to her in the hope that its fragrance might help to while away the tedious hours of the night. Perhaps she *imagined* that the pillow helped her to win sleep—I do not know. Anyway, that, so far as we were concerned, was the end of our "Sweet Pillow."

Here is a recipe for "Sweet Jar."

Gather a quantity of roseleaves, carnations, pinks, syringa, lavender, heliotrope, verbena, and such other sweet-smelling flowers as your garden proffers. Dry for a day. Put a layer in the bottom of a pretty jar, sprinkle with common salt to which a little baysalt and saltpetre has been added, then put another layer of flowers, and more salt, and so on until the jar is filled or the supply of flowers exhausted. Stir the jar every day for a week and then add just a little powdered orris root, a few ground cloves, and some orange peel dried in the oven and crushed to powder. Keep the jar tightly corked when not in use.

Woodruff is pleasant amongst linen as a change from lavender. It is only after woodruff has been dried that

its perfume is really noticeable. The scent is as much in leaf and stalk as in the flower, so that the whole plant should be gathered. It retains its perfume for several years.

Tansy and rue, tied in little bunches and hung about the house in summer, help to keep flies away. Moths do not like these two, so put them in bags together with equal quantities of dried mint, and thyme, and a few ground cloves. Moths will not go near the cupboards in which little muslin bags containing these herbs are hung, and if you use them your clothes will smell delightfully fragrant instead of "naptha-ish," as they so often do when moth balls or any of the various chemical moth preventatives have been used.

Oil of lavender may be made by putting a layer of lavender flowers in the bottom of a glass jar, covering these with a circle of cotton wool soaked in olive oil, then more lavender flowers and more cotton wool until the jar is full. Lay a piece of glass on top of the jar and stand it in a sunny place for a week, when the scented oil may be squeezed out and bottled. Lavender oil rubbed upon the skin will discourage gnats and midges, those wretched little insects who by their attacks drive many a poor mortal from the enjoyment of a garden at its best—a garden at sunset.

Rose-jam is an old-fashioned conserve whose flavour is almost unknown to the present generation. It should be made from full-blown red roses. Four ozs. of petals (about 3 bunches, each containing 20 roses, would supply 4 ozs.), 1 lb. of sugar, and the juice of a lemon, treated in the following manner will give a delicious result :

With the left hand grasp each rose so that the petals are held firmly together, and with a pair of scissors cut away the whole of the green and white part at the base, so that only the red portion remains. When 4 ozs. have





~~~~~ J U L Y

been thus obtained add a little sugar and the juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  the lemon and rub thoroughly with the fingers until very soft.

Put the lb. of sugar, together with the juice of the other  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the lemon, into about 3 gills of water and let it boil until it begins to thicken *slightly*. Do not allow it to become syrupy. Add the pulped petals and boil until the right consistency is obtained.

## JULY

### FOR GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

|                   |                                                                                                              |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Antirrhinum.      | Chrysanthemum maximum.                                                                                       |
| Canterbury Bell.  | Gypsophila.                                                                                                  |
| Campanula.        | Tropæolum speciosum (flame flower), a thing of precious beauty; grows better in the north than in the south. |
| Pentstemon.       | Nasturtiums.                                                                                                 |
| Marguerite.       | Statice.                                                                                                     |
| Gaillardia.       | Sweet Sultan.                                                                                                |
| Veronica spicata. | Achillea.                                                                                                    |
| Carnations.       | Sweet William.                                                                                               |
| Cornflowers.      | Clarkias.                                                                                                    |
| Montbretias.      | Daisies.                                                                                                     |
| Lilium candidum.  | And many of the flowers mentioned in last month's list.                                                      |
| Roses.            |                                                                                                              |
| Nigella.          |                                                                                                              |
| Coreopsis.        |                                                                                                              |
| Inula.            |                                                                                                              |

#### LOOKING AHEAD

|                                                                     |                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Propagate Pinks and Carnations.                                     | Hardy Cyclamen coum, blooms with the Snowdrops; so does Ibericum. Plant now. |
| Re-pot old Cyclamen corms for the greenhouse.                       |                                                                              |
| Sow seeds of Freesia for flowers at Christmas, or re-pot old bulbs. | Sow Polyanthus and a few annuals for autumn bloom.                           |

### FOR NON-GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Roses       | Delphiniums. |
| Sweet Peas. | Gladioli.    |
| Coreopsis.  | Achillea.    |



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*Calliopsis look well without leaves. Here they are arranged in a vase into which a tumbled ball of wire has been dropped.*

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*Calliandras are one of the pea flowers which look well in a glass container.*

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J U L Y

*Alstroemeria*.

Asters.

Carnations.

Clarkias.

Cornflowers.

Daisies, large white.

Richardias, yellow.

*Statice sinuata*.

*Statice Suworowi*.

*Statice latifolia*.

Stocks, in colours.

Sweet Sultan.

*Scabiosa caucasica*.

Sweet William.

# AUGUST

## THE FLOWER VASE IN SUMMER

It is high summer and nature offers not just a flower here and a flower there as in the earlier months of the year. In August above all other months, she literally strews the earth with beauty. Let us take a leaf from her book. Let us put away the small vases and wee bowls which were so useful here and there about the drawing-room a while ago. In their place let us put two, or if possible three, really large vases and in them make a riot of colour—a very feast of flowers indoors.

Please do not think that large bowls and great vases of flowers are only for the woman with either a very big garden or a very deep purse. Even if your garden is only the size of a pocket handkerchief and your weekly flower money but a shilling or two you can have certainly one, and by exercising a little ingenuity maybe two, great splashes of colour and perfume in your sitting-room during August.

You'll put one vase on the floor, won't you? So many flowers are seen at their best from above. Stand it by the folds of the heavy curtain that drapes your window, or in the fireplace, or in the angle made by a piece of furniture and the wall, or on a footstool by the side of the big armchair in which you may be sitting at this moment.

What kind of vase will you use? Perhaps you have a jardinière, or large willow pattern soup tureen, or one of those brass pitchers which were used for taking hot





water to bedrooms in the days when every bedroom had a wash-hand-stand—anything of that kind would be excellent. Personally, I find the nicest thing is a witches' cauldron—you know the kind of thing I mean, round and black, on three little legs—almost all the big furniture stores sell them to be used as coal buckets.

In this arrange a cottage bouquet of all the flowers you can lay hands upon. Half a dozen heads of Sweet William, a few calceolarias, and a spray or two of green from bush or hedge, will make a good foundation. Into these place a few marigolds, the last bunch of rambler roses, a few snapdragons, stocks, asters, a pink or two, a seedling lupin, gaillardias, phlox, and so on. If your garden is really small buy a bunch of Sweet Williams or stocks or whatever other flower you have decided to use for the foundation of your vase, then the drain on the garden will not be so great.

The arrangement of the flowers will call forth a certain amount of artistic skill, for these apparently careless arrangements require more care than do the more formal affairs. If too many flowers are used the bowl will look clumsy; if there are too few they will fall to the sides, leaving a bare space in the centre. But if a twiggy spray or two of leaves are put into the bowl first, then some short-stemmed rather large-headed flowers, and lastly a knot of long-stemmed flowers here, and a knot of long-stemmed flowers there, a most beautiful effect will be created, and one which will call forth exclamations of pleasure from all who see or smell it.

To use in conjunction with such a floor vase I would suggest a pitcher of mixed flowers. These mixed flowers, so reminiscent of a cottage garden, are always more at home in an unconventional container such as a pitcher or tankard than in an ordinary flower vase. Nor need your pitcher be an old one: there are most lovely modern

ones, jolly little fat affairs in bright colours, or slim jugs in soft tones.

Sometimes a floor vase and pitcher such as I have described can be filled with treasure trove from the wayside and woods. Stately foxgloves, flaming willow herb, marguerites with ingenious child-like faces, blue cornflowers, purple heath or heather, sprays of brightly coloured bramble leaves—oh, a dozen things such as one may find rambling through the lanes in summer.

Once arranged, these vases will remain fresh for seven or eight days. On the fourth day pull out any dead flowers and stand the vase beneath a running tap to freshen the water.

Here is another unusual drawing-room arrangement :

Buy a reel of green hat wire at the haberdasher's counter of a big store or in a hat shop, cut off about a yard, and fix the two ends firmly in a heavy glass or lead flower-holder. Stand the flower-holder in a shallow bowl. The wire will form a hoop round which you can twist a few sprays of nasturtiums, filling the bowl with nasturtium flowers and leaves. Or you can drape the hoop with canary creeper, honeysuckle, clematis, ampelopsis, or, where nothing else offers itself, with trails of small-leaved ivy. The bowl need not always be filled with the same flowers as those you have used on the wire. For instance, a hoop of small mauve clematis might complete a bowl in which float fully-blown yellow roses ; or trails of sweet pea foliage wreath the hoop while a group of sweet peas fill the flower-holder from which the wire springs ; or a hoop covered with Virginia creeper be accompanied by a dozen floating heads of the mauve viola " Maggie Mott."

And talking of violas—have you tried floating in a shallow bowl a head from every tuft of pansies or violas that your garden boasts ? It is so interesting to compare

the various colours in which these flowers abound, and one really sees them to better advantage floating in a bowl than in any other way. If you use such a dish of pansies in order to relieve what would otherwise be a squat solemn decoration, put a small flower-holder slightly to one side of the dish where it will be hidden by the floating heads, and in this flower-holder place a few long-stemmed violas or pansies gathered with a little of their own foliage.

And now shall we think of flowers for the hall? It is so important to have a really nice vase in this part of the house—the first thing your guests see upon arrival and the last when they leave. In most halls tallish rather stately flowers are the best, and if your hall is at all gloomy let the flowers be white, pale pink, or pale yellow. Lilies, iris, gladioli, small sunflowers, white campanulas, pink mallows, carnations—any of these would look well in a tall cut-crystal vase. The side shoots of hollyhocks which flower after the main stem has been cut would be appropriate in this position, while if your hall is large and lofty the great centre spikes themselves will make a strikingly beautiful decoration *if* they will condescend to remain alive. I have found that hollyhocks, so gallant and sturdy in the garden, become moody and difficult to please when cut; some will live a week in water, others will droop in a few hours. I have never been able to discover just what it is that displeases them.

Flowers for the dining-room shall have a chapter to themselves in September.

And then there's the breakfast-room. Use yellow flowers there whenever possible for they add a pleasant ray of sunshiny colour and a touch of gaiety to the first meal of the day.

Here sprays of yellow broom would be graceful, though perhaps a vase of these would be a trifle tall for

so intimate a meal. *Coreopsis* might be better, or little tufts of delicately perfumed tree lupin, or sweet sultan, or *mimulus*. A jar filled with *Limnanthes Douglasii* would attract blundering, brown velvet-clad visitors to your table.

In this position try a little low bowl filled with sand and a tuft or two of Iceland poppy foliage as a setting for the crumpled yellow and white "Jap-silk" of a dozen Iceland poppies.

Try a finger bowl or two set carelessly here and there amongst the various dishes of the breakfast table, filling each finger bowl with yellow and purple heartsease—that is if these "weeds" with their deprecating manners and beseeching faces have beguiled you into allowing them a home in your garden.

The pretty country custom of placing a small bowl of flowers upon the dressing-table prepared for a guest is spreading with well-deserved rapidity. Such a bowl is a gesture of welcome either to a stranger staying in your house for the first time or to an old friend. Fill it with homely flowers such as roses, stocks, or pinks, and if you are able to add a sprig of rosemary, ladslove, or lavender for the sake of perfume and charm, why, so much the better.

And then there is the kitchen. Surely those who work all day in what is really the hub of the house need more than any of us the stimulus of beauty, the cheery faces of a handful of flowers to help them through their tasks. So let the last vase you arrange be one for the kitchen and I am sure this vase will be as much appreciated as any other in the house.





*There is something altogether delightful in a bunch  
of wild flowers set in an ordinary form in this way.*

## AUGUST

### FOR GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

|                                   |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Lilium speciosum.                 | Montbretia.                                             |
| Ceanothus (Gloire de Versailles). | Rudbeckia.                                              |
| Hollyhock.                        | Solidago (Golden Rod or Golden Wings).                  |
| Shasta Daisy.                     | Dahlias.                                                |
| Sea Holly.                        | Gladioli.                                               |
| Globe Thistle.                    | Larkspur.                                               |
| Lavender.                         | And many of the flowers mentioned in last month's list. |
| Various Lilies.                   |                                                         |
| Phlox.                            |                                                         |

#### LOOKING AHEAD

|                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| St. Brigid Anemones planted now in a sheltered corner will give flowers from January onwards. | for Christmas flowering Roman Hyacinths, Duc Van Thol Tulips; also Narcissi, Squills, Jonquils, Freesias, Trumpet Daffodils and Iris tingitana to flower in February. |
| Plant bulbs of Madonna Lily (Lilium candidum).                                                |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Plant the first batch of bulbs                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                       |

### FOR NON-GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

|                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Chrysanthemums.            | Gladioli Primulinus.   |
| Asters in colours.         | Gypsophila paniculata. |
| Cornflowers.               | Lily of the Valley.    |
| Daisies, large.            | Lilium longiflorum.    |
| Stocks.                    | Lilium speciosum.      |
| Rudbeckia.                 | Marigold.              |
| Erigeron.                  | Nigella.               |
| Montbretia.                | Antirrhinum.           |
| Gladioli, giant varieties. | Larkspur.              |

# SEPTEMBER

## TABLE DECORATIONS

OLD oak furniture has captured the popular fancy to such an extent so far as dining-rooms are concerned that I think I ought to deal first of all with those flower-holders and colour schemes which would particularly suit an oak dining-room. Such a room would probably have cream or fawn walls, enclosing a Welsh dresser or sideboard upon which stand pieces of pewter or willow-patterned dishes. Ladder-backed chairs would be set about a long refectory table (or an oval table), upon which at meal-time small mats take the place of a white table-cloth.

If you have a dining-room at all similar to the one I have described you have a wonderful background against which to arrange flowers.

Not for you the more ordinary glass or china vase or shallow bowl. With a little thought you can have most artistic and interesting floral decorations.

Have you a pewter tankard and a pair of pewter plates? If so, the pewter tankard standing in the centre of your table and flanked by two pewter plates will form the nucleus of a dozen striking floral groups.

Try filling the tankard with scarlet geraniums, gathering two spikes with a fair amount of foliage and extra long stalks and the rest with the ordinary amount of stalk. The two long-stemmed geraniums should stand up above the rest when arranged in the tankard, to balance the handle. Then in each of the pewter plates float just





one scape of geranium and a leaf or two. The soft sheen of the pewter, the flaming scarlet reflected in the dark wood against the background of cream or fawn walls, will delight you I am sure.

If you have a garden in which *Lychnis chalcedonica* or *Monarda didyma* grow use these lovely scarlet flowers as alternatives to geraniums during the Summer.

From January to May you will be able to use your three pieces of pewter for tulips. I think single tulips look better in a pewter tankard than in any other form of vase, and there are so many vivid colourings in the tulip which would lend themselves to the decoration of your room—colours such as orange, crimson, scarlet, white, pale gold, and claret, not to mention the grotesquely flaked and splashed parrot tulips.

By the time you are tired of experimenting with the various tulips, laburnum will be out. Picture in your mind the clear yellow and tender green of laburnum against the grey gleam of pewter! Just a few branches of uneven length for your tankard and a single spray, with two or three green leaves to float in each of the pewter plates, will be enough to make a perfect table decoration.

When the laburnum is over there will be peonies, and later the old-fashioned Gloire de Dijon roses. Yellow calceolarias too, orange marigolds and wine-red phlox—in fact almost all those large-headed, rather stiff flowers, which are difficult to accommodate elsewhere, will be at home in your pewter tankard. The best colours to use are red, scarlet, orange, yellow, and purple.

Another trio of unusual vases for the dining-table in a dark oak room might consist of a Devonshire pitcher and two honey jars.

Devonshire pitchers are unusual in shape and are made of terra cotta. The inside of each pitcher is glazed

with brown and a few drops of the glaze are allowed to overflow carelessly down the outside, giving a rustic effect which is pleasing.

The tiny jars in which one buys heather honey, each about four inches high and three inches wide, exactly match these Devonshire pitchers, being unglazed terra cotta outside and shiny brown within.

Such terra-cotta ware has an old-world air which makes it most suitable for a room done in oak ; moreover, there is a simplicity about it which renders it particularly suitable for the old-fashioned cottage garden flowers. So if you acquire two wee bowls and a pitcher try filling the pitcher with spikes of lavender and the two bowls with mauve catmint (or *Nepeta Mussini*, as the nurserymen call it). Or put a handful of honeysuckle in the jug, allowing one extra long trail to depend over the side so that it touches the table and another spray to stand clear above the rest. Fill the small bowls with short-stemmed sprigs of honeysuckle, and you will have an arrangement not only pleasing to the eye but wonderfully fragrant as well.

As an alternative perhaps you will try mixing the little roses called " Maids of the Village " with a few trails of purple clematis or, if you have no " Maids of the Village," substitute that small cream yellow rose " Alberic Barbier," which has such lovely foliage and which blends so well with all types of clematis.

Antirrhinums, either in one variety or mixed ; pinks, both single and double ; climbing nasturtiums—there are a host of simple flowers in the summer months from which to choose. In autumn the outdoor chrysanthemums look perfect in these earthenware jars, and all the spring flowers are happy in them too.

Just one more word about these rustic pots. They are the type of vase in which wild flowers look happy :





blue bells and primroses ; branches of wild plum blossom with little bowls of forget-me-nots ; wild roses and honeysuckle ; hips and haws, and all the gloriously tinted foliage that autumn brings can decorate your dining-room in their company.

\* \* \* \* \*

Candles are highly decorative in conjunction with flowers, and, unlike the pewter and the earthenware, look well on a dining-table no matter what style of furniture or decoration the room contains.

I should like to suggest as my next foundation for table decoration a many-branched Sheffield plate candelabra with two very large Sheffield plate salt cellars to accompany it. Such dignified table decorations could be achieved by anyone fortunate enough to possess materials such as these !

Almost as pleasing would be a pair of silver sticks of good shape, together with a small silver bowl ; indeed, these would lend elegance to any table. With silver or Sheffield plate I should use plain hand-moulded white candles, and these would, of course, be longer than the candlesticks which held them. The silver bowl being small would not hold many flowers, and these should be really choice : a few pink carnations arranged with their own foliage, half a dozen very perfect red roses, a handful of cyclamen with a spray or two of small-leaved ivy, or a dozen lily-of-the-valley. Silver and choice flowers such as these would be appropriate for rather special dinner parties and other more or less formal occasions.

For more ordinary use or as a change from silver you might like a pair of glass candlesticks and a cut-glass bowl. (Glass is particularly lovely on a mahogany table.) Or, again, you might like small ebony candlesticks and

a black Wedgwood bowl. Brass sticks and a brass bowl would be unsuitable for any dining-room since the brass would clash with the table silver.

Candles are now to be had in dozens of different shades and can be bought to tone with whatever flowers are being used. To suggest but a few colour schemes—black candlesticks might have a pair of orange candles and the shallow black bowl can be filled with nasturtiums or orange marigolds loosely arranged. Later the same candles can be used with zinnias, gaillardias, orange-gold antirrhinums, and eschscholtzias. A pair of golden-yellow candles would accompany small sunflowers, Iceland poppies and coreopsis. With scarlet candles you might use *Monarda didyma*, pentstemons, lychnis, anemones, and poppies.

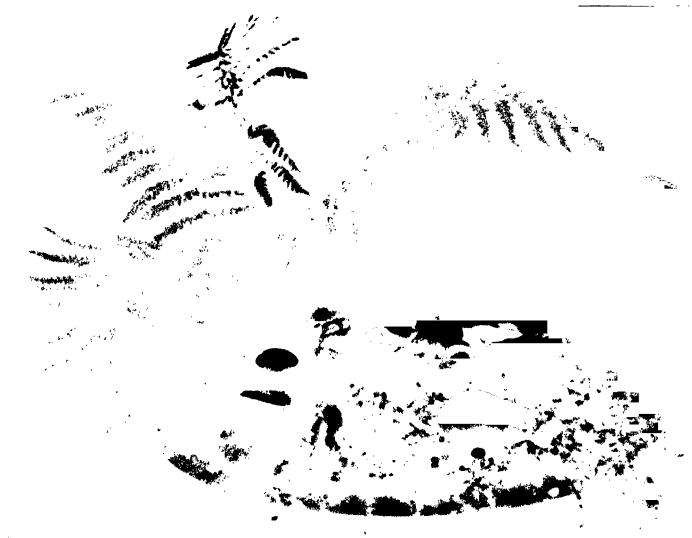
To accompany the cut-glass choose delicate colours and the lighter, more graceful flowers. A glass bowl of mauve nepeta mixed with giant armeria (a flower which some people call "Thrift" or "Sea Pinks") flanked by a pair of candles, which repeat the wonderful fuchsia colourings of the latter flower, would be unusual. Mauve scabious and pink stock, accompanied by a pair of pink candles, though more ordinary, would be very appealing. Pink and mauve Michaelmas daisies could be used with pink candles, too, and various combinations of the paler coloured sweet peas. Perhaps the prettiest of all would be a cut-glass bowl filled with the pearly-white broom called "Moonlight," set between two jade green candles in tall glass candlesticks.

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# SEPTEMBER

## FOR GARDENERS

### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

Dahlias.  
 Tritomas.  
 Rudbeckia.  
 Gladioli.  
 Marigolds.  
 Phlox.  
 Stocks.  
 Michaelmas Daisies (Barr's  
 Pink is one of the best for  
 vases).  
 Larkspur.  
 Japanese Anemones.  
 Montbretias (try using with  
 trails of Nasturtiums and  
 Kniphofia in a large bowl.  
 The various shades of  
 orange and scarlet make a  
 display of flaming beauty).  
 Chrysanthemums.  
 Asters.  
 Solidago.

Clematis Vitalba, which  
 grows wild in the hedge-  
 rows in the south, has  
 white downy seedpods,  
 which have earned it the  
 sobriquet "Old Man's  
 Beard." These are ex-  
 tremely decorative. A bowl  
 of hips and haws with  
 feathery clouds of "Old  
 Man's Beard" looks just  
 like a fire—orange, scarlet,  
 deep crimson, in a haze of  
 smoke.  
 Physalis.  
 Honesty.  
 Godetias.  
 Late Roses.  
 Sweet Peas.  
 And many of the flowers men-  
 tioned in last month's list.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Evergreens (for foliage) should  
 be planted this month :  
 Escallonias.  
 Crataegus Pyracantha.  
 Olearia Haastii.  
 Laurustinus.  
 Lonicera nitida.  
 Cotoneaster.  
 Lift a box full of Marigolds

into frame or greenhouse ;  
 they will give small vases  
 of orange flowers right  
 through the winter.  
 Plant bulbs of Crown Im-  
 perials.  
 Both Parma and Sweet-  
 scented Violets should be  
 got into frames this month.

## S E P T E M B E R

Plant Winter Aconite in odd corners for flowers in January ; also Snowdrops and Crocus. The hardy Cyclamens like partial shade and well-drained soil.

Daphne Mezereum gives flowers when flowers are

scarce. It is a very hardy bush and likes a little lime. Lift a plant or two of *Cineraria maritima*, and keep in frost-proof place to provide grey leaves for winter decoration.

In late September or early October order a box of the South African Chinchinchees, which can be obtained through a good florist or direct from Cape Town. The white flowers will be in bud when they arrive in December. The first buds open a few hours after being put into water, and the remainder gradually unfold until at the end of three weeks every truss of bloom is perfect. They remain perfect for several weeks ; indeed a box of Chinchinchees with a few evergreens will supply five or six vases of flowers, which will last through the whole of December and January, the two months when flowers are so scarce and so dear. A box of 100 blooms usually costs 7/6.

### FOR NON-GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Chrysanthemums.  
Physalis.  
Honesty.  
Mothbretia.  
Gladioli.  
Asters.  
Stocks.  
Carnations.  
Cornflowers.

Lily of the Valley.  
Marigolds.  
Roses.  
Scabious.  
Statice in variety.  
Sweet Sultan.  
Dahlias.  
Larkspur.



— — — — —



*Pink Michaelmas daisies in a beaten, painted pot  
will mask an empty fireplace*

# OCTOBER

## AUTUMN ARRANGEMENTS

THE far-seeing woman will make a special pilgrimage or two into the country before October gales have swept the tired leaves into golden pools around the feet of the naked trees, a pilgrimage from which she will return with armfuls of beech, of oak, and of bracken.

I have been told that autumn branches are disappointing, in fact scarcely worth arranging, because they cast their leaves a day or two after they had been brought into the house. This will not happen if the branches are gathered just as the leaves commence changing colour. The leaves will acquire glorious bronze, tan, topaz, amber, and saffron tints indoors, and will remain upon the branches for many weeks.

Branches for use during December and January will have to be preserved. I think the easiest way to do this is to lift a corner of the carpet of a spare bedroom, lay the sprays singly on the floor, cover with thick sheets of brown paper (or newspaper), and replace the carpet. This method is simple, quick, and clean. So much cannot be said for another method which also gives excellent results—I mean varnishing. Varnishing is a sticky job, and moreover it requires considerable patience to paint every scrap of even one spray of leaves let alone a dozen. Clear shellac is the best varnish to use, and it greatly facilitates matters if each branch which is to be painted is first of all firmly wedged into the neck of an empty medicine bottle. This obviates the necessity of handling

sticky stems, and the bottles containing the finished branches can be stood in any convenient place while the varnish is drying.

Look out for toadstools in the woods if a really unusual table decoration appeals to you. Two scarlet toadstools, or a large orange one, with a group of those delicate spindle-legged fawn ones which sometimes grow on dead tree stumps, arranged on a bed of moss in a shallow dish will well repay the care required in getting such fragile things from the wood to the house without breakage. (See page 49.)

Berries are another part of the hedgerow harvest which we garner in October. A bunch of hazel nuts, beech mast, acorns in their cups, horse-chestnuts, each and all will have their use during the winter.

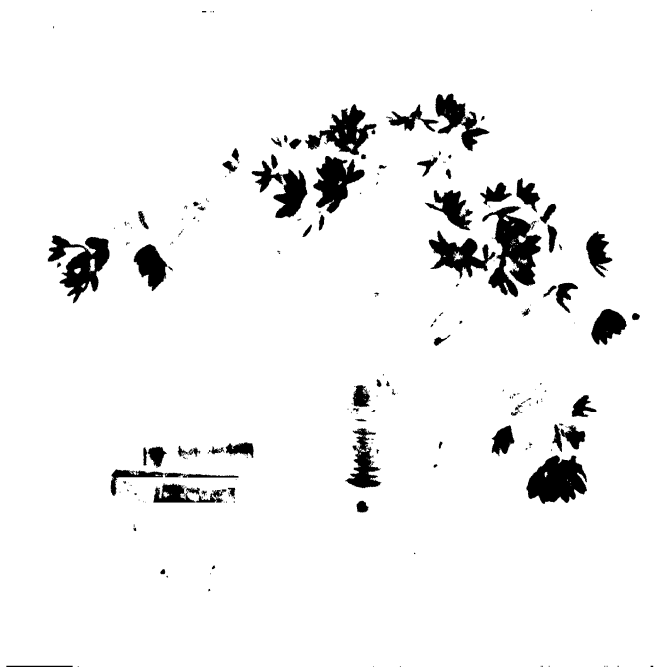
When flowers are very scarce I sometimes stand a little china squirrel on the polished surface of my dining table ; around him I lay a well-proportioned spray of orange brown beech leaves with just one or two beech nuts scattered here and there. Oak with acorns, and chestnut leaves with chestnuts, used in this way would, I think, give equally good results.

Branches of coloured leaves look well when arranged with some of the larger autumn flowers—red dahlias and amber-yellow sprays of oak, brown beech with pearl-white *Anemone japonica*, and of course almost all chrysanthemums mix well with autumn foliage.

And what a wide variety of chrysanthemums there are ! From the noble globes of colour, the piled plumes of snow, the huge discs of finely shredded petals, or of broad waxen petals almost as wide as those of a single dahlia, through all manner of gradations to the tiny buttons in spreading bunches which grow in old country gardens.

And the colours !





Does any other flower combine such diverse shapes and shades, with long-lasting qualities, easy culture, and such a long period of bloom? The chrysanthemum is the mainstay of our vases from mid-September to mid-January, and yet we never tire of it; indeed chrysanthemums seem to grow more popular with every year.

If your house has large, high-ceilinged rooms try filling a big brown basket with huge blooms, each one stiff and perfect. When these blooms are a week or ten days old, and the lowest petals of all are beginning to turn brown, nip off the heads, trim away the dying under-petals with a pair of scissors, and float the heads in a big bowl with autumn leaves or sprays of ivy. Used in this way they make a good table decoration and will last another week.

For the smaller home I would recommend Chinese vases. Almost all types of Chinese vases and dishes are in harmony with the larger chrysanthemums. Do not use this flower in glass vases if you can help it; the stems, stripped of their leaves and bruised (as they should be if the flowers are to last long in water), are not at all pretty.

The smaller chrysanthemums look their best in bowls about the size of a tea-service slop basin, or in brown stoneware, and some of the bronze ones can be used in brass shell cases.

The single chrysanthemum adapts itself to any room and almost any arrangement. It is a flower to experiment with, try it against all manner of backgrounds, and in as many different vases; either with its own beautiful foliage or amongst other foliage its possibilities are endless.

Michaelmas daisies are particularly useful during October. The mauve ones mix beautifully with solidago; the pink and white ones deserve each a vase to themselves.

The smaller perennial sunflowers look gay. Put them into tall vases, dark green for preference.

Asters make pretty bowls for the table, particularly the single pinks ; they are charming by artificial light.

Stocks, though rather stumpy and therefore difficult to arrange, must on no account be forgotten, their perfume is so lovely.

Vigorous and easily grown, Clematis Vitalba can scarcely be dispensed with even in the smallest garden where flowers are grown with one eye on the vases. Its fragrant creamy flowers and feathery "fruits" are most useful. Two sprays enhance the beauty of a Lalique bowl—or does the bowl enhance the beauty of the sprays of clematis? Each is so exactly the complement of the other that one does not know which to place first.

If the silvery disceptments of honesty, "those pale, flat crown pieces with which, without a doubt, the elves and fairies carry on by moonlight their trade in spells," have not yet been gathered, bring them in before rain and wind have spoilt them.

Both honesty and physalis ("Chinese lantern flower") can be bought in the flower shops during October.

As the days become shorter and colder we must augment with ingenuity our dwindling supplies. Mirrors are most useful now ; hang one behind a side-table where it will not only double your flowers but reflect added light into your room.

And when my lady frost on silent feet haunts the garden, leaving each morning a scrap of her diamond sewn gossamer veil to remind us of her nocturnal visit, we reluctantly bid farewell to all but a very few outdoor flowers, and turn to the greenhouses in general and to chrysanthemums in particular for colour and fragrance for our vases.





## OCTOBER FOR GARDENERS

### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

|                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tritoma.            | Everlasting Flowers.                  |
| Michaelmas Daisies. | Asters.                               |
| Stocks.             | Cornflowers.                          |
| Marigolds.          | Many Hips and Berries are decorative. |
| Chrysanthemums.     |                                       |

### LOOKING AHEAD

|                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plant a few bulb Iris (Dutch and Spanish) for flowers to cut when the Daffodils are over. | Pyrus japonica.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Plant :                                                                                   | Viburnum Tinus.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Trollius.                                                                                 | Plant out young Canterbury Bells, not forgetting to reserve one or two of the best for pots. Grow these in the cold frame until the Chrysanthemums are over, and then bring them into the greenhouse. |
| Galega.                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Scabiosa caucasica.                                                                       | Campanula pyramidalis (Chimney Bell flower) may be treated in the same way.                                                                                                                           |
| Peonies.                                                                                  | The foliage of Prunus Pissardi is particularly useful for spring flowers. Plant now.                                                                                                                  |
| Phlox.                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Roses.                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Every garden should have some bushes which give flowers in January :                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Chimonanthus fragrans.                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Hamamelis mollis.                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Winter Jasmine.                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Lonicera fragrantissima.                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

## FOR NON-GARDENERS

### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chrysanthemums.      | Heather.                       |
| Everlasting Flowers. | Lily of the Valley.            |
| Roses.               | Liliums.                       |
| Carnations.          | Marigolds.                     |
| Arums.               | Michaelmas Daisies.            |
| Asters.              | Stocks.                        |
| Cornflowers.         | Violets (" Prince of Wales "). |
| Gardenias.           | Dahlias.                       |

# NOVEMBER

## MAKING A MINIATURE TABLE GARDEN

IT is during those months of the year when flowers for table decoration are scarce, that most women cast covetous eyes upon the Japanese miniature table gardens displayed so invitingly in the more exclusive flower shops. These Japanese gardens are quite expensive, ranging from two to five guineas for quite a modest affair, and where tiny trees one or two hundred years old are used the price is very much higher. In the circumstances many of us look and long, and then reluctantly pass by the windows where they are displayed.

If I may I should like to tell you how you can make for yourself not a Japanese table garden but an English miniature garden at a very low cost—about half-a-crown or something like that you know.

Such a garden once made will provide a table decoration all the year round if desired. Or it can be stood in a shady corner out of doors during the summer months when flowers are plentiful, and brought into the house again for the autumn and winter.

Quite the nicest thing in which to make your garden is an oval casserole dish not more than two inches deep. Just an ordinary brown earthenware affair such as may be found in any pot shop. Or, if you prefer to, you can procure from the shops which sell garden requisites a shallow seed pan—oval, round, square, or oblong.

The best form of landscape to imitate will be a rocky mountain or boulder-strewn hill, and a valley. The

mountain (or hill) taking up about two-thirds of the earthenware dish, with the valley in the remaining space.

To a certain extent the success of your effort depends upon the choice of suitable stones to include in the tiny mountain. The very best effects are obtained with stones that are green-over with moss. You will only need about three, and they should be about the size of a woman's closed fist or perhaps a little smaller.

To find these mossy stones may at first glance seem rather an effort—I assure you it is not really. Many people need look no further than their own gardens, particularly where the garden has a few trees, or a deep shady corner with a northern aspect. There are almost sure to be a few green stones in such places.

In any case even the city dweller has access to the country in these days of tram, train and motor car, and the search for a stone or two will give zest to a country walk on a bright frosty day. Look for them in damp places, beside the small ditches in hedge bottoms, and underneath trees. In a wood you will find not only suitable stones but probably one or two wee ferns not more than the height of your little finger. To the maker of a miniature garden the latter are real treasure trove, and they should be carefully lifted and put with the stones.

When you make the garden the first thing to go into your earthenware dish should be a big handful of pebbles. Cover these with soil, banking it up a little at the side upon which you intend to make your hill.

On this foundation pile up your mossy stones, packing plenty of soil firmly between them.

You will probably remake your landscape several times before you feel completely satisfied with the result, experimenting with it first this way, then that, until you achieve the most artistic and natural outline.

There ! the groundwork is finished.

Now comes the delightfully interesting task of clothing the miniature garden.

I don't know which is better for the valley, grass or moss. Half a matchboxful of fine lawn seed will soon give you a small grass plateau. But this will have to be periodically mown with a pair of scissors, and will need renewing at least once a year. Perhaps a piece of moss (from the same source as the moss-grown stones) is more serviceable, since, once settled in place it is done with, and will be always the same year in, year out.

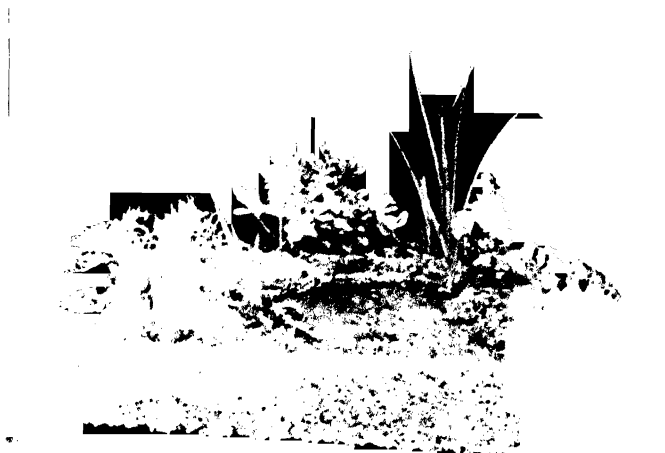
Now we must decide about the plants. I think the prettiest results are obtained by covering the hill with plants and leaving the valley just simply an unbroken level of grass or moss.

Only the tiniest of rock plants should be used. Wee silver-leaved things will act as foils to those with green or golden foliage. They can be ordered at any nurseryman's shop, and cost but a few coppers each. The assistants in these shops are always most helpful. If you are a complete novice just tell the man what you want the plants for, and he will make suggestions. Or if you care to go to a plant nursery (of which there are quite a number within twenty minutes' tram run of even the largest cities), you will see the actual plants, and in this way probably make a happier choice than you would be able to do either from the description offered by a catalogue or an assistant in a city shop.

Have you an odd crocus or two or a few snowdrops pushing their heads up in your garden? If so take them up just before they come into flower; they won't mind being transplanted, and will look ever so jolly in your table garden.

Just one crown of the homely London Pride can be jammed in between two of the stones, but choose the smallest piece you can find; you might even take off





*A miniature water garden with a tiny stone island.*



*A perfume garden containing thyme, verbena, dill, and lavender, all growing in one miniature space.*

one or two of the larger outside leaves, thus making an apparently unsuitable piece the right size. A dwarf forget-me-not will flower on the hillside for weeks and weeks if the faded flowers are nipped off. Or one of the two new primulas, "Wanda" and "Juliae," which produce cheery little red and pink flowers one after the other until you wonder when they *are* going to stop, could be pressed into service.

Then there are the small mossy saxifrages, sempervivums, aubrietias—oh! and hosts of other things to choose from.

When you have thought the matter over you will perhaps decide to have three or four permanent plants, whose green, silver, or golden foliage forms their chief claim to beauty, and, in a conspicuous place towards the top of your hill, one flowering plant. Amid the green and grey this will make a patch of colour for two to three weeks, and when its flowering period is over can be removed to make way for some other plant just commencing to bloom. It will not be necessary to disturb any of the permanent plants, simply lift out the one that has finished flowering and carefully press a new one into its place.

May I again remind you to select only the smallest, lowest growing things—a large clump of any one thing will throw the whole of your landscape out of proportion.

Many people will think out ingenious additions to their miniature gardens—additions which will give a touch of personality to the landscape. A miniature lake in the valley; a tiny cascade, made with small pieces of mirror; a very narrow sandy path winding in and out amongst the boulders of the hillside; or a little thatched cottage made from a matchbox with the help of paint and a few strands of brown raffia. There are endless possibilities for those who have nimble fingers.

## N O V E M B E R

And those who, in addition, possess the gift of patience can have miniature English trees, very similar to the trees in the Japanese gardens, having the gnarled trunk and hoary twisted branches of full maturity, yet being no more than a few inches in height. These are grown from acorns, chestnuts, the seed of the laburnum, etc., soaked in water for a few days and then planted. Every year the little trees must be taken up and their main roots cut back, so that only the fine thread-like roots remain. In five years such trees will be quite sturdy affairs, and by the time they are twenty they will be rather valuable and very lovely.

Table gardens make delightful Christmas presents, particularly for invalids ; they are much appreciated in the nursery, too.

# NOVEMBER

## FOR GARDENERS

### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LAKE

|                                              |                        |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| A few hardy Cyclamen and<br>Autumn Crocuses. | From the greenhouse :  |
| The last of the Marigolds and<br>Stocks.     | Cyclamen.              |
| Foliage and berries.                         | Primulas.              |
| Toadstools.                                  | Geraniums.             |
| From the greenhouse :                        | Winter-flowering Sweet |
| Chrysanthemums.                              | Peas.                  |
|                                              | Violets.               |

### LOOKING AHEAD

|                                                                  |                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Finish planting bulbs.                                           | Plant out hardy biennials                       |
| Plant roses and herbaceous<br>perennials whenever pos-<br>sible. | grown from seed, wall-<br>flower, honesty, etc. |

## FOR NON-GARDENERS

### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

|                           |                 |           |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Chrysanthemums.           | Marigolds.      |           |
| Roses.                    | Nerines.        |           |
| Carnations.               | Stephanotis.    |           |
| Cyclamen (in pots).       | Stocks.         |           |
| Anemone (" St. Brigid "). | Violets.        |           |
| Arums.                    | Acacia          | } French. |
| Gardenias.                | Chillies        |           |
| Lily of the Valley.       | Solanum Berries |           |
| Heather, white.           |                 |           |

# DECEMBER

## CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

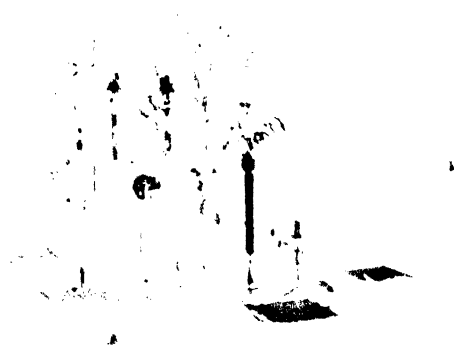
CHRISTMAS decorations consist mainly of three things. Evergreens, which suit old or pseudo-old houses ; paper streamers and garlands, which suit modern houses ; and flowers, which suit every house.

Let's consider the flowers first.

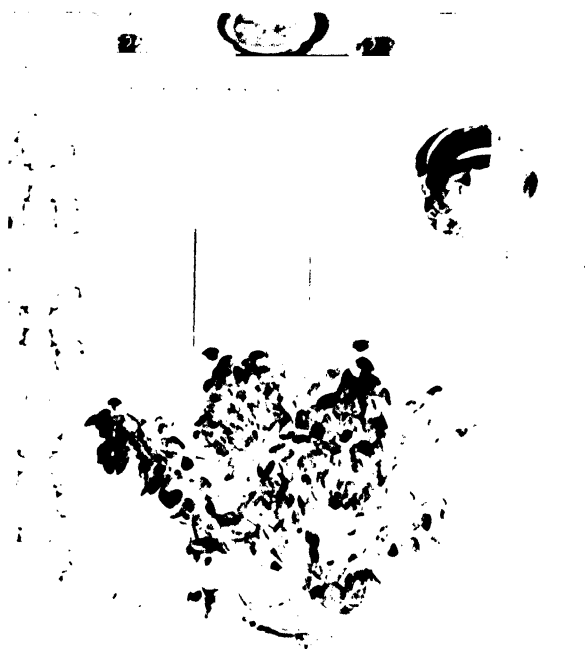
There's no getting away from the fact that flowers are scarce at Christmas time, and those we have must be made to go as far as possible. There are several ways of making just a few flowers look like a great many. One is to use plenty of green. Those who have greenhouses or who care to buy greenery will use asparagus, smilax, and various kinds of fern. But quite as effective as these are the ordinary evergreens from garden or lane, such things as yew, box, holly, privet and ivy—particularly ivy. To give you two instances : bunches of jonquils which the flower-sellers offer in December never have any foliage with them, and how dreadful they look if one tries to arrange them just as they are ! But put a twig or two of evergreen into a trumpet-shaped vase, and then add the jonquils one by one, and you will have quite a pretty result. Or try this with a bunch of violets and a few sprays of ivy. Put a heavy glass flower-holder into a small shallow bowl. Choose two nice sprays of ivy, one perhaps six inches long, and the other a little longer, and place these upright in the glass block. Lay all the rest of the ivy in the bowl in such a manner that it hides the block from view, then stick twenty or thirty violets



*A table decoration which will please children and some grown-ups as well*



*A Christmas decoration. An old silver witch-bald, green holly lightly flecked with silver "frosts," arranged in silver vases with sprays of scarlet boreas grass to give just a touch of third colour*



into the block so that they look as though growing amongst the ivy leaves, and finally put little knots of two or three violets here and there about the bowl.

Another thing which will help to amplify your Christmas flowers is the use of decorative baskets instead of vases or bowls. Six or seven chrysanthemums in an upright vase make a very ordinary arrangement, but six or seven chrysanthemums with some evergreens in a basket make a large imposing decoration—a decoration which fills the eye. You have only to look in the flower-shop windows to realise the decorative value of baskets, for almost all good florists use them instead of vases, knowing well that their graceful curves will show flowers to their best advantage.

I believe many people imagine such baskets are expensive—and really they are just the opposite. Baskets such as one would use in the house range in price from a shilling to half-a-crown. They are usually painted in soft colours, and the shapes are so varied that choice becomes a difficulty. Some of them have tall overhead handles; others a pair of handles projecting out at the sides like large ears.

For the centre of the table at Christmas what could be nicer than an oblong basket about the size of a brick, with a square overhead handle. If bunches of pink crackers were tied to the handle, one bunch rather high up on the left side and another low down on the right, and the basket filled with holly and pink chrysanthemums the result should be delightful.

Or you might choose an oval basket, with a huge round handle at each side, and fill it with scarlet tulips and Roman hyacinths and a couple of tiny ferns.

Or for a small table, have a little silver basket shaped like a ship—a galleon—filled with parma violets.

Usually the kitchen can supply something to put inside the baskets to hold water—a pickle dish, or a pair of finger bowls, or custard cups, or in the case of a large basket, a casserole dish.

Apart from flowers our Christmas decorations are more or less governed by the type of house in which we live.

Paper decorations—even the nicest ones—are apt to look tawdry in an old house, and evergreens, unless they are used with extreme discretion, merely look sombre and out of place in ultra-modern rooms.

First, here is a suggestion for the dining-room of an old-world house.

Tie four pieces of narrow scarlet ribbon to the rose of the light above the centre of your table. Each piece of ribbon should be long enough to have its other end pinned to the corner of the tablecloth or tied round the table leg. Use these four ribbons as a foundation upon which to twine long pieces of smilax or strands of ivy. At intervals of about twelve inches tie on scarlet blown-glass ornaments—the kind of thing they use on Christmas trees you know.

Upon each corner of the table place a low vase containing three or four scarlet tulips, and in the centre a large vase of the same flowers.

Garlands of smilax, or ivy, entwined with scarlet ribbons may be hung in various places about the room. Vases of scarlet tulips placed upon the mantelpiece and side-board should complete a scarlet and green scheme which would harmonise well with the gracious dignity of old furniture.

Candles enter into the spirit of Christmas, and the beauty of their soft flickering light reflected in a well-polished table-top has caused many a housewife to discard the white tablecloth in favour of small mats.

Where no tablecloth is used try a decoration in white and green, using white or green candles, mistletoe, and a white flower—chrysanthemums, white tulips, freesias, or Christmas roses. Candles are to be had in various sizes. One pair 6 inches high, a second pair 12, and a third pair 18 inches high might be stood in silver candle stands at intervals along the length of your dining table. Place the shortest pair of candles in the centre of the table with sufficient room between them for a large, flat, cut-glass dish or salad bowl. The medium-sized candles should be a little way from these and in a line with the small ones, then two small cut-glass dishes about the size of finger-bowls, and the tallest pair of candles just in front of the host and hostess at either end of the table. Be careful to have your six candles and five dishes in an exactly straight line. In the cut-glass dishes arrange your flowers. A sprig or two of mistletoe will give the necessary green, and, if you care to, you could also lay tiny sprays of mistletoe here and there on the table.

If you decide to have four streamers from the middle of the ceiling to the corners of the table with this decoration, use narrow white and green ribbon twined with silver tinsel, and tie very small bunches of mistletoe here and there on each streamer.

For the sideboard perhaps a pair of tall candles with a dish of nicely polished green apples and green grapes between them, and on the mantelpiece and side tables bunches of mistletoe or white flowers with *pale* green foliage (not the darker green of holly and evergreens).

Here is a scheme that would be exactly in keeping with the spirit of the modern dining-room—that delightful little apartment of simple lines and gay colours.

The whole decoration can be put up in ten minutes, and the only materials you will require are some rolls of paper streamers (the kind we throw at one another at carnivals and dances) and a dish of fruit.

Once more the light over the dining table will form the centre of the decoration.

Just stand in one corner of the room, and, taking careful aim, throw a streamer between the cords from which the bowl or chandelier hangs. Tie the end of the streamer you hold in your hand to the picture cord, or pin it to the picture rail with a drawing pin. Then throw another streamer from a different point in the room and fix the end, and another, and another, until you have a perfect canopy of gaily coloured paper ribbons held together in the centre by the electric light.

"Making a tent of ribbons" the children call this decoration.

Short lengths of differently coloured streamers may be allowed to hang down from the light in snaky coils, the longest almost touching the table, the shortest a mere "squiggle" a few inches long.

In the middle of the table pile a trencher with fruit. Bright red and green apples, golden oranges, and velvety grapes, with the jolliest carnival novelty you can find stuck into the topmost apple as a finishing touch.

For drawing-room or lounge garlands of laurel leaves stitched end to end are pretty. Four short lengths festooned across the corners of the room, and another length draped above the mantelpiece make a good foundation for a decorative scheme which, for its details, would depend upon the colour scheme and furnishing of the room. Where there are a fair number of flowers these, with the festoons of laurel, would probably constitute a sufficient decoration; where flowers are *really* scarce, vases of holly mixed with scarlet *Bromus* grass

might be stood here and there. Almost all flower-shops sell dyed *Bromus* grass, and this is particularly useful when berries are few.

And when you've finished decorating the house—when even the kitchen has been given its bright adornments—why not take a piece of string two or three yards long and tie upon it here and there pieces of cocoanut, lumps of fat, raisins, and half-shelled Brazil nuts. Festoon this from tree to tree or from one tall stick to another in the garden, and the birds, particularly the tits, will make a living decoration outside your window during the whole of Christmastide.

## DECEMBER

### FOR GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

Christmas Rose.  
 Hardy Cyclamen.  
 Winter Jasmine.  
 Laurustinus.  
 Cotoneaster frigida with its decorative scarlet berries.  
 Shrubs with yellow leaves are useful; Cupressus Lawsoniana aurea, Golden Yew and Golden Privet.  
 In the Greenhouse :  
 Cineraria.  
 Cyclamen.

In the Greenhouse :  
 Anemones.  
 Roman Hyacinths.  
 Van Thol Tulips.  
 Primulas.  
 Violets.  
 Chrysanthemums in variety.  
 Freesias are graceful and fragrant. Home-grown ones last 13 to 20 days in water. Bought ones last only 5 or 6 days.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

|                                      |                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Begin taking Chrysanthemum cuttings. | Plant hardy plants and shrubs whenever the weather allows. |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|

### FOR NON-GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

Violets.  
 Chrysanthemums.  
 Pink Anemones.  
 Carnations.  
 Hyacinths (Roman).  
 Tulips.  
 Cyclamen.  
 Jonquils.  
 Arums.  
 Lilac.  
 Lily of the Valley.

Iris.  
 Freesias.  
 Christmas Roses.  
 Narcissus, paper white.  
 Narcissus, "Soleil d'Or."  
 Roses.  
 During December a good supply of evergreen and variegated foliage is generally available, also plants carrying ornamental berries.

# JANUARY

## BRIDGING THE GAP

It is from the time when a fresh calendar receives a prominent place upon the writing-desk, and we turn for the first time the crackling white pages of a new diary that, from the flower-vase point of view, the woes of winter are upon us. There is a gap to be bridged—a gap between the discarding of the last chrysanthemums and the arranging of the first vase of daffodils. Whether we bridge it with forethought or with ingenuity depends largely upon the time at our disposal.

The woman who, in October, laid in a store of spent flower heads and seedpods—of honesty, physalis, “love-in-a-mist” and columbine—need spend but little time bridging this gap.

Vases of physalis, those slender arching stems hung with glowing orange scarlet “lanterns,” make patches of flaming colour about the house in grey January. There is something a little Chinese about physalis, and this effect can be heightened by using a Chinese vase and arranging the sprays of lanterns with short tufted branches of fir. (Plate facing page 55.)

If physalis has the beauty of flames, then honesty can be compared to moonlight. A heavy glass block in a cut-glass salad bowl, filled with wands of honesty and stood upon a dark table brings to a room something of the pale glimmering quality of moonshine. In a room where light colours prevail such an arrangement would, of course, be insipid, but where the walls are fairly dark,

and particularly in a room or hall panelled in oak, a large bunch of honesty can stand alone. (Plate facing page 63.) Where walls are light use twigs of dark evergreens to throw honesty into relief, choosing a simple vase of coarse pottery of medium colouring (*i.e.* neither as pale as the honesty nor as dark as the evergreens) to hold them.

Love-in-a-mist seedpods keep quite well for winter use. Probably it is these weird globes of greenish purple, with their horns and curling whiskers, that have earned for love-in-a-mist its other name, "Devil-in-a-bush." Their beauty being delicate is easily overwhelmed by a too robust or too highly coloured vase. Pale china or clouded glass suits them admirably, but nothing brings out their latent loveliness quite so surely as does a Lalique vase.

Spent heads of hemlock, goutweed, or fool-parsley, with ribs like the spokes of a coverless umbrella, are still to be found wherever a hedge has sheltered them from the wind. Two or three in a narrow-necked vase by a window may be unnoticed during the day, but in the dusky, firelit hours they will spring into prominence, etched in black upon the cold grey sky of a winter twilight.

These seedpods and spent flower heads take only a few moments to arrange, and the busy woman who has laid in a store of them, and has a few bowls of forced hyacinths and tulips, need spend less time upon her vases in January than in any other month of the year.

For those with time and ingenuity there are other decorations with which to bridge the gap in the floral year.

Painted larch cones are very pretty, and suit well the modern room. One large spray is enough for a vase.





## J A N U A R Y

The one in the photograph opposite was enamelled lettuce-leaf green, and the cones are bright pink, silver, fuchsia, canary yellow, and black. The rather obese jar of varying tones of grey stands beside a pewter plate upon the top of a bookcase thrown into sharp relief by a plain, silver-speckled wall. Not the least attraction of such a decoration is the shadow it throws when the lights are lit.

Another decorative spray can be achieved by stringing acorn cups, each pierced with a red-hot needle, upon knotted strings of various lengths, and then tying these upon a carefully chosen branch—for preference a branch with a downward curve. Before being used the string should be steeped in strong coffee to give it a brownish colour which will tone with the brown of the acorn cups and the branches.

Or the widely opened cases of beech mast, which strew the ground beneath beech trees in winter and are just like little brown flowers, can be turned to account. These, wired on to short branches, then gilded and the smooth inner side of each picked out in scarlet, are unusual. Arranged in a small gilt basket they would be charming in a rather formal drawing-room.

The few fresh flowers which the average woman is able to obtain from the garden for her vases in January are more interesting—perhaps one might say more appealing—than decorative. Half-a-dozen Christmas roses, an odd anemone or two, a few sweet-smelling iris, twigs of winter-sweet and witch-hazel, hardy cyclamen, and towards the end of the month the first messengers of spring—snowdrops and aconites. There is seldom enough of any one flower to make a vase, but if a tiny bowl labelled (mentally if not actually) "Contributions

gratefully received" be kept upon mantelpiece, bureau, or bookcase, and these brave flowers of the bleak days put into it as they come to hand, they will make a point of interest, though they may not fill the eye as would a more pretentious arrangement.

Where there is a greenhouse the choice of flowers is a little more varied. There will be cyclamen, freesias, early hyacinths, tulips, cinerarias, and primulas. Of these flowers the two latter last almost as long in water as they do when growing on the plant, so it is as well to gather them, leaving the plants in the greenhouse to produce a second crop of flowers.

Cyclamen flowers last about a fortnight in water if they are properly gathered. The stems should not be broken or cut, but pulled from the plant with a sharp upward tug. Gathered in this way the stem comes away whole (as a stick of rhubarb does when it is pulled), and in consequence does not "bleed." When arranging cyclamen cut each stem and put the flower straight into the vase of water so that the juice which the stem exudes has no time to seal up the end and prevent free access of water.

A charming centrepiece for a small luncheon table can be made by laying the wire top of a rose bowl in a rather deep plate or a fruit dish, and arranging a dozen small sprays of ivy, each two or three inches long, in such a manner that they completely hide the wire, then—as though growing from this mound of ivy—put in a few white cyclamen.

The shops offer freesias, pretty and sweet-smelling, but short-lived; violets, which have the same appeal and the same fault; and the usual carnations, roses and lilies, which are too expensive and exotic for everyday use.

A big bowl containing half a dozen Roman hyacinths, ten or a dozen Duc van Thol tulips, and four wee ferns, makes a large and satisfying decoration. These flowers can be bought on the bulb; they cost very little, and planted in ordinary soil remain fresh for a surprisingly long while. One large bowl is far more decorative than three or four small ones each holding three solemn hyacinths or perhaps four stiff tulips.

In the florists' shops the gap between the last of the chrysanthemums and the first of the daffodils has ceased to be, chrysanthemums and daffodils being offered side by side in the windows during the first week in January. But the average woman does not want to buy chrysanthemums after Christmas; they are autumn flowers, and we are looking forward to spring. The forced daffodils of early January are so frail and short-lived in comparison with the sturdy daffodils of February and March that they scarcely seem the same flower, and they are certainly not worth the price asked for them.

And so for most of us the gap continues to exist, and the bridging of it has come to be a sort of test, for, although almost anyone can make a lovely picture with summer flowers, only those who have imagination and artistic ability are able to fill vases with beauty during the first few weeks of the year.

# JANUARY

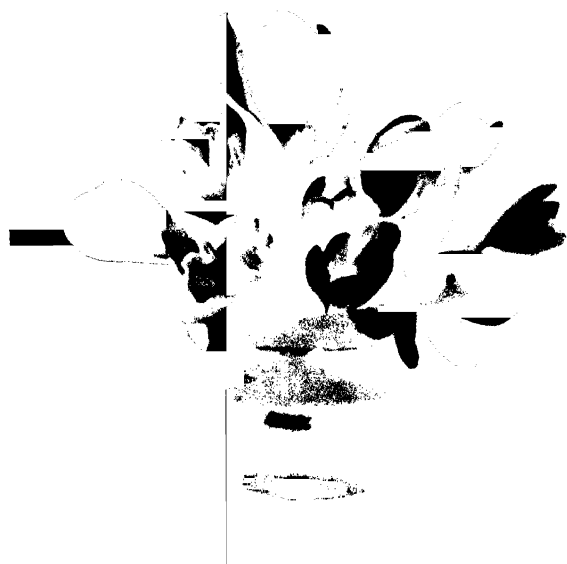
## FOR GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE.

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Chimonanthus fragrans</i> (Winter-sweet)—pale yellow flowers on bare branches, lovely perfume.</p> <p><i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> (Winter Aconite)—yellow, low growing; naturalises well under shrubs or trees.</p> <p>Snowdrops in the south.</p> <p><i>Hamamelis mollis</i> (Witch-hazel)—yellow, a most useful and hardy flowering shrub.</p> <p>Christmas Rose. Protect with a sheet of glass to obtain clean unspotted flowers.</p> <p><i>Jasminum nudiflorum</i>. Pale yellow, well-known wall shrub.</p> <p><i>Lonicera fragrantissima</i> (Winter Honeysuckle) Creamy flowers, quite hardy. Very fragrant.</p> | <p><i>Pyrus japonica</i> (Japanese Quince). Coral-red flowers. Best on a wall.</p> <p><i>Viburnum Tinus</i> (<i>Laurus-tinus</i>). White. Evergreen. Flowers from autumn till spring.</p> <p><i>Iris unguicularis</i> (<i>stylosa</i>). Flowers November to March. Pull (do not cut) while in bud, and allow to open indoors.</p> <p><i>Anemone coronaria</i>. Offers a few flowers from November onwards.</p> <p><i>Berberis japonica</i> (<i>hyemalis</i>). Evergreen with small yellow flowers and large pinnate leaves. Not showy, but attractive.</p> <p>In the Greenhouse: <i>Cinerarias</i>, <i>Primulas</i>, <i>Cyclamen</i>, <i>Freesias</i>, <i>Chrysanthemums</i> and various spring bulbs.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## LOOKING AHEAD

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Little can be done during January. In fine intervals plant <i>Doronicums</i>—<i>Harpur Crewe</i> is a good variety. These will mix well with twigs of silver birch later on. Sow Sweet Peas under glass, also</p> | <p><i>Antirrhinums</i> (white, yellow and rose are good vase colours; the very dark velvety <i>Antirrhinum</i> is disappointing when cut).</p> <p>Begin planting <i>Anemones</i> and <i>Ranunculus</i> towards the end of the month.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|





FOR NON-GARDENERS

FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Lily of the Valley. | Freecias.           |
| Carnation.          | Cyclamen (in pots). |
| Rose.               | Arums.              |
| Violets.            | Ghent Azaleas.      |
| Chrysanthemums.     | Camellias.          |
| Daffodils.          | Eucharis.           |
| Jonquils.           | Gardenias.          |
| Snowdrops.          | Lilac.              |
| Van Thol Tulips.    | Narcissus.          |
| Roman Hyacinths.    | Anemones (French).  |

# FEBRUARY

## MAKING THE MOST OF A FEW FLOWERS

HERE is a device which I have found excellent for making the most of the few flowers, often only two or three at a time, which the garden and lane offer at this time. I have a large shallow bowl, it is about eighteen inches across and two inches deep. In this I make two small heaps of stones ; in one pile there are about six stones, and in the other ten or a dozen. These stones range in size from about as big as a walnut to—well, the largest ones will be slightly bigger than a matchbox. The two heaps of stones conceal two small glass flower-holders. I keep this bowl half-filled with water, and into it go all manner of odds and ends from time to time. Sometimes wedged between the stones of one little rockery will be three or four Christmas roses and a trail of ivy, while in the other there'll be a few hardy cyclamen with just a little of their own foliage. *Iris stylosa* (*unguicularis*) with its sweet perfume often has the bowl to itself, though at times it shares the little stone heaps with sprigs of witch-hazel. The first violets open here, the first primroses too. Here the very earliest snowdrops droop pensively, looking almost as though they have grown in the bowl instead of in a sheltered garden in Cornwall. After the snowdrops there'll be half-a-dozen freesias with their own grass. By then the most forward of the crocuses will be showing colour. As soon as they do, I shall gather them, for if I did not do so either the blackbirds or sparrows would tear them to pieces, or the rain and

wind would spoil them. But, gathered and safely wedged amongst the stones in my bowl, they will open their purple and gold flowers each morning, and close them again when day is done for at least a week.

Tiny pink-tipped daisies taken by the root, and a few golden celandines or coltsfoot from the hedgerows look charming in this setting, particularly if a small sprig of hawthorn or any other bush or tree that is just bursting into leaf is added. In using these wild flowers I think the best effect to aim at is a minute field of daisies and buttercups watched over by a tiny tree.

Branches and twigs stood in jars of water where the sun can reach them (the kitchen window is as good a place as the greenhouse really) will unfold their buds far in advance of those out of doors. Large chestnut branches forced into leaf in this way are particularly attractive, for the leaves instead of opening green in the usual way are covered with a grey silky down, and they look like tiny ghostly hands held out imploringly to spring, bidding her hasten in the name of their sleeping comrades.

In February bowls of bulbs are at their best ; hyacinths, tulips, daffodils, and narcissus are grown by almost everyone but one does not see the smaller bulbs quite so frequently.

Bowls of squills begin to flower in February, and continue for six to eight weeks. Muscari are almost as good. Muscari plumosum, whose finely shredded and curled petals have earned it the name " Feather Hyacinth," is particularly pretty and unusual.

Flat dishes of yellow crocuses are welcome, not only for their cheerful colour but because our minds so associate them with spring that, having once seen them in bloom, the winter seems done and early spring arrived, long before this is really the case. Crocuses should be planted quite close to each other and stood in a dark

place for eight weeks. When they are brought out into the light it is an excellent plan to scatter a little grass seed all over the top of the soil through which the green noses are poking. The seed will soon sprout, and when the flowers open the effect is pleasing.

Freesias are straggly things and not so adaptable to culture in bowls as many of the other spring flowers, but they are well worth growing in pots and boxes to cut for use in vases. Home-grown freesias, cut when the first flower opens, last almost a fortnight in water. Those purchased in shops do not, of course, last so long.

Freesias can be grown from seed quite as well as from bulbs. Seed sown in late July will flower in January, and a second batch sown in August will give flowers until late February.

The tiny daffodils of the *Narcissus triandrus* type, occasionally seen in well-furnished rock-gardens, are especially pretty grown in bowls or pots for household decoration. These daffodils are rather like a fuchsia in shape. *Triandrus albus*, often called "Angel's Tears," is a tiny white daffodil not more than six inches high, and *Triandrus* "Queen of Spain" is similar, though a wee bit taller and of a pale yellow colour.

Then there are the "hoop-petticoat" daffodils, of which the first will flower in February. *Narcissus Bulbocodium monophyllum* is a very long name for such a fragile flower to wear. In March its brother *Narcissus Bulbocodium citrinus* will follow on, and *Narcissus Bulbocodium conspicuus* completes the trio by flowering in April.

## FEBRUARY

### FOR GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM GREENHOUSE, GARDEN AND LANE

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Cyclamen coum—very small, rose-red flowers.</p> <p>Daphne Mezereum (Fragrant Daphne). Yields short twigs thickly crusted with flowers of a cold mauve red.</p> <p>Prunus Amygdalus (Pink Almond Blossom). Exceedingly decorative when cut.</p> <p>Petasites (Winter Heliotrope). Small white flower smel-</p> | <p>ling very like heliotrope. Plant in hedge bottoms or out-of-the-way corners, as it spreads alarmingly.</p> <p>Crocus. Quite charming in small vases.</p> <p>Genista. Still one of the prettiest flowering plants for February.</p> <p>Chionodoxas.</p> <p>Scillas.</p> <p>From the Greenhouse: the same as last month.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### LOOKING AHEAD

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Plant Rosa rugosa for its brilliant hips.</p> <p>Escallonia "edinensis" for sprays of pink flowers in July and August.</p> <p>Berberis Thunbergi has foliage which turns absolutely scarlet in autumn.</p> | <p>In the greenhouse sow Dianthus laciniatus if you like odd and unusual flowers for your vases.</p> <p>Try growing Dahlias from seeds. Sow in heat.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### FOR NON-GARDENERS

#### FLOWERS FROM THE SHOPS

- |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Daffodils are now worth buying.</p> <p>Acacia.</p> <p>Arum Lily.</p> <p>Tulips.</p> <p>Violets.</p> <p>Narcissi.</p> <p>Roses.</p> | <p>Carnations.</p> <p>Lily of the Valley.</p> <p>Anemones.</p> <p>Camellias.</p> <p>Tube Roses.</p> <p>Lilac.</p> <p>Azaleas (in pots).</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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